



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

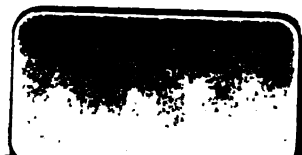
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

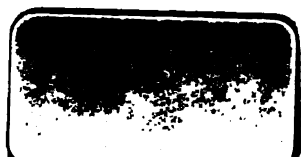
40.

805.



40.

805.



CHRONICLES OF LIFE,

BY

MRS. CORNWELL BARON WILSON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:

T. & W. BOONE, 29, NEW BOND STREET.

1840.

805.

T. C. Newby, Printer, Angel Hill, Bury.

PREFACE.

THE following pages are what they profess to be, the Chronicles of events in real life, that have furnished the groundwork of the fiction which covers them.

In reference to some of the sentiments attributed to the principal actors in "The Young Jew," "Passion," and "The First Brief," the writer has to observe that they were necessary for the illustration and development of the respective characters. But she trusts that in no single instance has she departed from that duty of the Novelist which enforces respect

for morality, even while picturing the darkest phases of human passions. With this explanation the Author commits her first Prose Work of Fiction to the Public.

London, Oct. 27th, 1840.

CONTENTS.

VOL. I.

CHRONICLE I.

	PAGE.
The Young Jew.	3

CHRONICLE II.

The Pawnbroker's Window.....	107
------------------------------	-----

CHRONICLE III.

Fame.....	195
-----------	-----

CHRONICLE IV.

The Invalid.	215
-------------------	-----

CHRONICLE V.

Love.	233
------------	-----

CHRONICLE VI.

The Truant Husband.	257
--------------------------	-----

VOL II.

CHRONICLE I.

The Loves of Tim O'Flannagan.....	1
-----------------------------------	---

CHRONICLE II.

Passion.....	85
--------------	----

CHRONICLE III.

The Poor Gentleman's Son.....	145
-------------------------------	-----

CHRONICLE IV.

The Sailor's Mother.....	173
--------------------------	-----

CHRONICLE V.

The County Member.	197
-------------------------	-----

CHRONICLE VI.

Mrs. Simpson:	213
---------------------	-----

CHRONICLE VII.

The First Brief. (Book I.)	227
----------------------------------	-----

VOL. III.

CHRONICLE VII. (*Continued.*)

The First Brief. (Book II.)	3
-----------------------------------	---

CHRONICLE VII. (*Continued.*)

The First Brief. (Book III.)	81
------------------------------------	----

CHRONICLE I.

The Debtor's Wife.....	143
------------------------	-----

CHRONICLE II.

The Young Fifer.....	157
----------------------	-----

CHRONICLE III.

Woman	167
-------------	-----

CHRONICLE IV.

The Milliner's Apprentice.	175
---------------------------------	-----

CHRONICLE V.

The Two Friends.....	239
----------------------	-----

A Wind-up Chapter.....	261
------------------------	-----

CHRONICLE ONE.

T H E Y O U N G J E W .

VOL. I.

B

THE YOUNG JEW.

CHAPTER I.

"I would have my bond."

SHAKESPEARE.

IN a dull neglected-looking house in one of the quietest London City lanes, and in a small dingy room containing dark old fashioned furniture, and an atmosphere so murky, that the candle burned sickly as if struggling to expand its light; a young man was seated examining the jewels in a small casket that lay on the table before him. They were of a

lustre that sparkled richly in the dimly lighted apartment, and the careful and almost stealthy manner in which he drew them from their silk-lined case made them seem like treasure. One by one every gem was removed and replaced—his eye glanced keenly over the glittering heap, and something like a look of scorn changed the attentive expression of his features.

His countenance was striking. It was neither eminently pleasing nor repulsive, but it was one that made the beholder look on it again. His forehead was high and massive, it had no wrinkles, but the shadowy lines about the lower part gave it a rigid marble look. His eyes were small, dark and piercing; the profile good, but the thin lips marred it. He was negligently dressed, seemed to be of middle stature, and his age might be guessed at five and twenty.

A sharp knock at the street door roused

him from his reverie, and in a moment or two afterwards, a thin, sallow-faced, elderly woman put her head into the room and whispering the name of "Mr. Gascoigne," retired.

The young man instantly rose, touched a spring in the oaken pannelling, and the door of a small recess flew open. Here, turning the heavy lock of an iron safe fixed in the wall, he deposited the casket, and re-locking the chest, threw off his coat, neckcloth and waistcoat, and put on others suited for the dress of an elderly man. Then, with a piece of dark chalk, and the assistance of a small mirror tha thung in the recess, he rapidly drew a few lines on various parts of his face—slight, but exquisitely chosen for the purpose he now seemed to have in view—touched his eyebrows with a powder that made their dark arches appear gray, put on a wig, and as if by magic his whole guise and aspect changed; and age was as strongly marked on them as youth had been before

Shutting the door of the recess, he pulled the bell, seated himself again in the leather-cushioned chair, and awaited his visitor.

“Ah! my old money bags,” exclaimed a tall handsomely dressed young man entering the room, “how wags the world of bills, bonds and usury?”

The other had already risen and pointed to a chair. His visitor, who appeared slightly flushed, threw himself into it, crossed his legs, and leaning back, confronted his companion.

“Well now, Mr. Samuel,” he continued, “for a Jew, you are one of the most accommodating men of my acquaintance—I will say that for you—you are looking well too, old gentleman.”

The Jew slightly bowed.

“Ha! ha! ha! You are a strange fellow. No Monsieur Dimanche to be lulled by compliments.—Come now,” continued Gascoigne resting the back of his neck on the top of his

chair, "I will for once say frankly what I think of you. You lead us poor prodigals on from loan to loan, charging usury at first with moderation, and advancing money readily, until we are wholly and irremediably in your power, and then you pounce upon us, as if like the devil, you delighted in our destruction. Tom Wilton thinks you ~~are~~ the devil, and says he never takes a loan of you, without dreaming of Doctor Faustus, ha! ha! ha!—I want three hundred pounds."

The Jew bowed again but more coldly.

"I am not only unlucky myself, Mr. Samuel, but the cause of bad luck in others. I have been rooked this blessed evening, and what is worse a friend who accompanied me has shared the same fate. I had hardly enough to pay my own losses—he falls short of three hundred pounds—I wish to assist him with that sum."

"You come to borrow money to lend a friend," said the Jew in a cold, hard tone.

" I do, I do. What interest must I pay?—
I shall be in funds in a month or two."

" Is your friend older or younger than
yourself?"

" Older, and yet young."

" Which is the dupe?"

" Dupe ! what do you mean?"

" Why do you lend the money?"

" Out of friendship."

" Older than you, and you borrow money to
lend him out of friendship—I am poor just
now."

" Nay, nay, why tell me that."

" What is your friend's name?"

" Egad, Mr. Samuel, it is always thus. You
ferret out secrets no other of your tribe would
give a rush to know. Wilton says he never
sits here for five minutes without fancying he
smells brimstone ; and I never do without
thinking myself before the Inquisition. What

matters the name. He has more difficulty in borrowing money than I."

"Has he a sister?"

"No."

"A wife?"

"He has—a lovely creature!"

"Umph!—I thought so."

"Oh! by Heaven, the finest woman in England—a bust, a figure like Venus herself!"

"Umph!"

"An eye, full, languishing—and roguish too."

"I see—you are not the dupe."

"Ha! ha! ha! Dupe—dupe. Cannot you then consider a man's actions but by the rule of three; nor calculate his motives but by your interest tables? I would do more for Frankford than lend him a few hundred pounds, even if I had less friendship for himself, and none at all for his wife."

"You borrow the money for Sir Walter

Frankford," said the Jew giving a look of greater interest.

"I do, I do. Now what will you let me have it for?"

"Did he ask you to borrow this money for him, or did you propose it yourself?"

"Ask; no, no—he did not—he could not well have asked me. But he was distressed about the debt—the person he lost the money to, made a remark that cut him so, he swore he would get the money to-night, even if he should ask his wife to pledge her jewels."

"And do you think she would have done so?"

"That I cannot tell—I presume she would."

"Lady Frankford is a woman of fashion, and may have debts of her own."

"True; but she would not have refused her husband when his honour was concerned. She would have given up her jewels."

The Jew laughed.

Gascoigne's air of levity had been gradually subsiding, and when he now addressed the Jew it was with an evident *effort* to sustain it.

"Egad, Mr. Samuel," said he, "I don't know if it be you, or the air of this place that affects one, but I never sit here without feeling my spirits damped.—Come, on what terms can I have three hundred pounds for a month or two?"

"I will take your bill for five, at a short date."

"A cool two hundred! Matters are not so bad with me as that yet. My solicitor can get me the money."

"By depositing the title deeds of your estate in Essex. Give *me* that security, and I shall be content with a lower rate."

"No, no; you are sure of being repaid."

“Then your deeds are *sure* of being redeemed.”

“I am certain of receiving money in a month or two.”

“Then why refuse your best security when it will save you so much interest.”

“No, hang it, no; I am not driven so hard as that. You know I have kept my word to you before.”

“You are poorer now, without being wiser for it. You wish me to incur a risk you will not incur yourself.”

“How?”

“You hope—perhaps you believe—to be able to pay me, but—”

“Aye.”

“Mark me, but—If you should *not* be able, you would rather the old Jew should be a sufferer, than that you should jeopardise your estate.”

“No, no, no, I do not see it in that light at—I—”

“Then put it in another—Your *friendship* for Sir Walter Frankford is strong enough to allow *me* to run a risk, but not sufficiently ardent to make you hazard a burden on your estate in Essex.”

“No, no ; but if I’m to begin to mortgage you know well enough how things would go—I have cut down the timber already.” Another knock was heard at the door. After the usual interval the old woman looked into the room, but this time retired without speaking.

“Another visitor, eh? You hold your levees at night.”

“Do you reject my terms?”

“Write out the bill, and I will sign it.”

This was done—and the money paid—The sound of the rapid wheels of Gascoigne’s departing cab had hardly left the ear when the

old woman ushered in the new visitor and immediately withdrew.

It was a lady closely wrapped up in a dark silk cloak—The Jew rose, bowed, and pointed to a chair. The lady looked to the door and throwing back the hood of her cloak exposed the beautiful features and large laughing Italian eyes of the celebrated Madame * * * * *.

“I have ventured here at last,” said she taking off her glove, and with her delicate white hand putting aside the dark ringlets which had fallen as if sportively over her brow.

“Your letter frightened me.”

“It was not intended to do so.”

“Oh, I *must* have the sum I asked! Why would not you see my agent—why do you stop short *now*, when I want money the most? I will pay you any interest you may require.”

“Your bill is valueless—as a married woman.”

“You took it readily before.”

"I will take it now, if your husband join in it."

"My husband! no, no, no—It was your allusion to him, that frightened me."

"He does not know you are in want of such a sum?"

"And he *must* not, *shall* not know," replied Madame * * * * * vehemently."

"There is only one way you can have it."

"What is that?" said the other eagerly.

"You must give up your jewels."

"My jewels!—no, no, no! do not take my jewels.—They are not worth much, and I value them."

"What actress does not."

"What *woman* does not," replied the impetuous Italian. "Jew, I will not give up my diamonds!"

"Then I cannot give up my gold."

"Ah!"

"How fond you are of baubles—They are often dearer to your sex than virtue."

"That too is said to be a jewel," said the other smiling.

"But one you cannot borrow money with, and therefore less highly prized."

"It adds to beauty though."

"Yet some are beautiful after it is gone."

The keen eyes of the Jew and the quick glance of the Italian met—"Jew," said she looking fixedly on him. "You were a libertine when you were young."

"Your sex is fonder of giving hard names than of receiving them. If woman's virtue is a jewel, it is one I have long known how to rate."

"No, no, you know the world, but nothing of woman's heart—you must *have* a heart, to know the heart."

"And I have got one."

"You!"

"Aye."

"A heart to feel love, affection, devotion?
You, you!"

"To understand them at least—"

"That is not to *feel* them—No, no, you had
never a heart suited to these."

"It may be not, but one eminently suited to
the world we live in."

"Ah!"

"It is *you* that know nothing of the heart.
You cannot look into a volcano. The heart
must be cold ere you dissect it."

"And yours is cold, chilled by age and
steeled by avarice—yet there is something in
those eyes of yours that tells me you can make
your wishes passions—you know the world."

"Better than the world knows me."

"I do not doubt it. Are many women
virtuous?"

"Do you think they are?"

"Not I."

"It is odd you should not."

"Why?"

"Because you know that few are beautiful."

The Italian laughed.

"And yet," continued the Jew, "they may wear the jewel you spoke of, without benefiting their beauty by it."

"But do they wear it?"

"Aye, and safely too."

"Safely?"

"The French have a proverb that tells us why."

"I do not know it."

"They say it is like hidden treasure."

"And why is hidden treasure safe?"

"Because it is not sought for."

"Jew," said Madame * * * * * "were you young, there would be poison in your tongue."

"My words would carry their antidote. Fools would not believe them, and to the wise they would be unnecessary."

“ I came to speak of money, and I am speaking of love—to an usurer—to a Jew!—Must I send my jewels?”

“ No, you must bring them.”

“ Ah.”

“ The sum you ask is large.”

“ Five hundred pounds. In a fortnight I shall receive twice that sum from the Opera.”

“ And have twice as many claims awaiting it.”

“ Then how shall I redeem my jewels?”
said Madame * * * * * with *naïveté*.

“ As I should be paid *without* them.”

“ Must I bring all my jewels?”

“ You had better—or if you retain any, let it be those you yourself have purchased—rather than those which were given you.”

“ Why, why?”

“ I might say, because they are likely to be of greater value. Let that be sufficient reason for the present.”

"It is an odd request. You have heard of the diamond bracelets given me by the Duke of * * * *.

"Bring them."

"Shall I also bring the earrings?"

"As they match, you may."

"The set of pearls Lord * * * * * gave me?"

"No. Lord * * * * *. See they are not paste."

"I never examine love gifts."

"Sir Walter Frankford has made you presents of jewels?"

"He has—but they are of little value."

"Bring them however. What are they?"

"A set of emeralds—a gold comb—I wear it to-morrow in the Opera—and yet I ought not to part with these—they were made for me."

The Jew looked disappointed. "Are these all?" he enquired.

“ Yes—no, there is a ring ; one he himself had used to wear.”

The Jew’s eyes brightened. “ Bring that,” said he.

“ You will find it a poor pledge, rejoined the other. It was not its value that made me ask it of him.”

“ Your love for the wearer ?”

“ No—not that.”

“ What then ?”

“ It had his wife’s hair in it, and I wished him to change it for a lock of mine.”

“ And he did so ?”

“ He did—and more. Her name was engraven inside the ring, he had mine put there too, with the words ‘ Love’ and ‘ Duty’ placed in a way Lady Frankford would be piqued at.”

“ Bring me that ring.”

“ I will. It is the trinket I value least. My

object was gained in Sir Walter's changing my rival's hair for mine."

"And yet you say you do not love him."

"A woman may have a rival for a man she does not love. I hate that woman!"

"She is beautiful."

"Have you seen her?"

"I have."

"But what can such as you know of beauty?"

The Jew laughed coldly.

Madame * * * * * looked keenly at him.—

"Jew," said she, "there is more in that look of yours than your words proclaim. "What motive have you for wishing for this ring?"

"You say you hate Lady Frankford."

"I do—I have always hated her!" said the Italian impetuously.

"I do not doubt it. It is said we are more apt to hate those we have injured than those who have injured us. If your wish be revenge

perhaps you may promote it by bringing me this ring."

"Ah! She is then in your power this proud-browed beauty! Tell me, Jew,—tell me.—And yet you! you, whose whole thoughts are sordid—yet tell me, and I will do what you wish although I should suffer for it. You wished to see me—you have some object. Tell me—you will find me easier by such means than by threats."

"I know how such as you are led. It is neither by policy nor by fear. A wise man said, the head is the dupe of the heart; he would have been wiser had he added, that the heart is often its own dupe again. It is a lesson of life that is not known in Italy."

"You speak riddles—but tell me, is Lady Frankford in your power?"

"Jew, do not smile! There is a fiend in those eyes of yours. God! how can an old

man's look depress me thus !—I will *not* bring the ring !”

The Jew laughed again.

“ You dare me !”

“ You are a woman.”

“ You mock me then !”

“ You are thirty, and have a rival, younger, and more—”

“ No ! not more beautiful !” cried Madame * * * * * vehemently, “ nor more virtuous either. If Lady Frankford borrows money without her husband's knowledge—if she puts herself in the power, even of such a man as you—the stately look she wears in public is but a mask !”

“ It covers a pretty face.”

“ Ah !”

“ They wear masks awkwardly in England.”

“ Jew, there is a Devil lurking in those eyes of yours !”

" You refuse me the ring ?"

" I will bring it to you."

The Jew did not smile.

" Would I knew the secrets of this den of yours," said Madame * * * * * looking round.

" You may know more of them ere long."

" As they affect others or myself ?"

" Both."

" Must it be a compact then ?"

" With a lovely woman and a rich old Jew—would it not seem a wise one ?"

" You speak riddles again."

" They are of your own creating—but they will soon be solved."

" My debts are fearful."

" You run wide of the mark."

Madame * * * * * blushed slightly. " Can it be !" she exclaimed suddenly, "*You love Lady Frankford ?*"

For the first time during their interview the Jew shrunk from his companion's look.

"Ah," cried she laughing a silvery laugh, raising her head, and throwing back her tossing ringlets from her brightening eyes, "Jew, I know your secret!"

"Think so now—you will soon know more."

"No—that look again—it cannot be—yet I will act as if I were aiding you."

"Do so," said the other pulling the bell, for his visitor had already risen.—"To-morrow bring the ring."

"I will, I will. Come no farther—a coach waits for me below—and now—good night."

CHAPTER II.

THE Opera was crowded. Royalty, and the proudest names of England were present.—Madame * * * * * sang brilliantly. Feeling, wild and heart-thrilling, vibrated in her tones, her voice soared like a spirit of melody above the sounds of the orchestra, and blended them into expression. She played passionately, exquisitely; and the applause was loud, frequent and long.

Lady Frankford was in her box. She was

plainly dressed, there was a shade of care upon her brow, yet she looked more beautiful than ever. The warmth of the house had brought a slight flush to her cheek, pure and delicate as the lovely skin it mantled on; her soft blue eyes glistened with the effect of the music, and in the taper's light, and the secret thoughts which contended with the impressions of the present scene, gave her features a touch of pensiveness. She looked what she was, an aristocrat, a beauty, and an English-woman.

Gascoigne too was there. He had sauntered from a pit stall to Lady Frankford's box, and was now whispering pleasantries over her white shoulders. There were other ladies in the front of the box, and other gentlemen in the back-ground, but these with good-natured tact, addressed themselves to each other.

A stranger whom no one seemed to know, sat alone in an opposite box. He was young

—his dark but striking features, his handsome dress, and the quiet self-possession even of his reposing attitude, gave him the look of a foreigner, and the air of a gentleman. His eyes were often fixed upon Lady Frankford with an intensity which would have startled her, had she witnessed it, and sometimes his glances rested on Madame * * * * *, but more listlessly. They were frequent enough however to let the quick eyed Italian see that she was an object of interest to him, and even to perceive that Lady Frankford divided his attention with herself. She was piqued. The opera proceeded. It was a glorious piece. The passionate music burst in rich harmony over the sparkling scene, young hearts caught its fervent spirit, even the most soulless were soothed and gratified. The second act was over, and the curtain fell. There was the usual share of flutter in the house, music had reigned before, it was Beauty's turn now.

Lady Frankford leaned back in the box and conversed with Gascoigne. A hundred opera glasses were pointed towards her, and whispers of admiration passed even between strangers, for each felt he was only paying a homage in common with all. There was many a lovely woman in those glittering circles, but none who attracted such general regard. It was a moment of secret triumph, and her animated looks half revealed her consciousness of it.

Sir Walter Frankford was at Crockford's. He was a thoughtless, dissipated man. He neglected his wife—not positively neglected, but our language does not admit of refinements on this word. He was, as Pope has it, “civil,” perhaps he was fond of her, but—no matter, the reader will understand by and bye. Lady Frankford was admired, universally admired, her own sex only *ribbled* at imperfections; she was fond of gaiety, min-

gled freely in the routine of fashion, and although her nature was gentle, it had a dash of spirit in it. She was fond of excitement, could play her part well in the world, and, however virtuous, was a dangerous wife for a husband to neglect.

The stranger continued to watch her attentively; but ere the curtain rose again, she left the house. He seemed interested in this, looked at his watch, but reclining in the box waited the conclusion of the piece. No sooner however was it over than he also departed.

St. Paul's clock struck twelve as Lady Frankford, in a hackney-coach and unattended, entered the silent lane in which the Jew resided. The vehicle drew up before the dull, tomb-like house; a few strokes of the heavy knocker brought the old woman to the door; Lady Frankford descended from the coach, and was admitted at once into the presence of the usurer.

He was again in the guise of an old man. His visitor for a moment or two appeared agitated. Her hand slightly trembled as she drew aside her veil; she was pale, her bosom fluttered, and the glance she threw around her was timid and uneasy. The Jew watched her with looks that mocked the disguise he wore. His calm cynical air for the moment forsook him—his eyes were kindled and exulting—and he seemed unconscious or heedless of the pause Lady Frankford's agitation created.

"Mr. Samuel," said she at length, "I wrote you I was in pressing want of a further loan—can I have it?"

"Has your ladyship more jewels?"

"No, every trinket of the least value is in your hands."

"Or any other security to offer?"

"None but the jewels already in your possession. They are worth twice what you have advanced on them."

" I do not think so."

" They cost thrice that sum."

" I do not doubt that."

" I must have eight hundred pounds."

" I am ready to return your jewels on payment of the sum for which I hold them."

Lady Frankford looked distressed. " I am threatened with prosecutions,—one of them for some of those very jewels—I must get the money before Thursday, otherwise I am ruined."

" Ruined ?"

" Yes, ruined, and what is worse, my husband—Oh ! they will put an execution into the house !"

" Your husband ! Nay, pardon me, he troubles you but little."

" What mean you, Sir ?" demanded Lady Frankford angrily.

" This," answered the Jew coldly. " You have a rout on Thursday—an execution in the

house might ruin *you*, but your husband would only laugh at,—perhaps be the first to tell it as a good joke next day at Crockford's."

"No," replied the lady, "whatever be his general character this *would* distress him."

"And is this the chief reason why *you* would be distressed at it?" enquired the Jew cynically.

"I am not accustomed, Sir, to answer categories like these," said Lady Frankford indignantly. "Can I have the money?"

"No,"—said the Jew, in a cold firm tone.

Lady Frankford's pride quivered for a moment, but it was instantly succeeded by an expression of anguish. She clasped her hands and wrung them in agony together.

The Jew watched her.

"I shall be ruined—made the laughing stock of England," she repeated heedless of the agony of mind she betrayed.

"Cannot Sir Walter Frankford—?"

"No, cried his wife abruptly, and if he could, I could not ask him."

"May I ask why?"

"Because, because these debts would require explanations which I—"

"I see."

"No Sir," said Lady Frankford angrily, "you hint at more than you have warrant for. A series of disasters brought about by my own imprudence has occasioned these debts."

"Sir Walter Frankford gambles deeply."

"Alas! I know he does," was the sorrowful reply.

"Is dissipated and intriguing."

"Intriguing! no, no. He gambles, I know he does; he slights home, I know he does; but Walter loves me. Did you say intriguing?"

"Aye lady."

"It is false! How *dare* you, Sir, tell me that?"

“Pshaw! I am too old to cower at a lady’s angry look, and too wise to become a corrector of public morals. Have you no other security then to offer me?”

“No, no; but my husband—what are his intrigues?”

“A goodly task! to give Lady Frankford a detail of her husband’s amours. I am a money lender, and can employ my time to better purpose.”

“But you said my husband had intrigues,” continued the lady with excitement. “Tell me what you know or have heard of them.”

“Nothing that is not known, and has not been heard by many others. I am old, but not garrulous. I can advance no more money on these jewels.”

“Do not speak of jewels! what is said of my husband?”

“That you and he pursue careers of gaiety—but in different paths.”

"I!—what mean you?"

"Nothing that your ladyship would choose to own."

"Nay, this *is* humiliation!" cried Lady Frankford vehemently.

"Not so—the proudest hearts in England are ready to worship you. Beauty like yours might well excuse a career of gaiety."

"Sir, Sir," exclaimed Lady Frankford with increased excitement, "I am not to vindicate my actions to you. I am not to set *your* ideas right concerning them. If gaiety has a meaning which implies dishonour, it is falsely applied to me. But my husband—"

"Loves another."

"Who, is that other?"

"A lady whose beauty almost equals your own, although it is of another clime."

"Who, what is the lady?"

"Madame * * * * *."

"Madame * * * * *?"

"The same."

"Is it so said?"

"It is."

"And what says the world?"

"That you are the loveliest wife a husband ever slighted."

"Then the world says wrong!" cried Lady Frankford stung to the heart. "My husband loves me—thoughtless, reckless as he is, *he loves me!* He does not love another. It is the gossip of those who neither know him nor me?"

"Be it so, and welcome. You are not in pressing want of the sum you asked?"

"I am, I am, I *must* have it. Have you heard this often?"

"Often! every day. No one comes to borrow money who does not say, they *must* have it."

"Money! do not speak of money. Have you heard this of my husband more than once?"

“ A hundred times.”

“ I do not—I shall not believe it. Walter loves me. Madame * * * * * is beautiful ?”

“ I have heard so.”

“ I cannot go to court to-morrow for want of jewels—and then an execution in my house on Thursday. Oh ! I *must* have the money. They shall not say I sit in sackcloth for a husband’s neglect—they shall not *pity* me !—I must have eight hundred pounds.”

“ I am too old to unlock my coffers because a lovely woman asks it.”

“ I shall be ruined—made a laughing stock of—despised—disgraced—pitied,” said Lady Frankford with encreased excitement. “ Are you convinced of the truth of what you have said ?”

“ To what does your ladyship allude ?”

“ My husband—that he loves another.”

“ If it will afford you any satisfaction to be

. convinced of this, I will shew you proofs that would convince the most sceptical."

"What are they?"

"No matter now."

"Do not say no matter—let me see those proofs."

"You shall, but not now. I promise you, you shall see them if you wish it."

"Why not now?"

"Lady, I will not be urged. Have you no other security you can offer me for the sum?"

"None."

"No one to join you in a bill?"

"None, none. To whom could I apply?"

"To Mr. Gascoigne of Morland Hall."

Lady Frankford started. The blood flew from her cheek, to which her late excitement had given a slight colour; her eyes looked to the Jew as if they would read his soul—but they encountered a mask of steel.

"If he join you in the bill," continued the Jew, "I will advance the sum."

"No!" almost gasped Lady Frankford,—
"*not him.*"

"He will do it readily."

"No, no, not him."

"You say you are in urgent want of the money."

"Not him, not him."

"Why not?"

"My husband—I think my husband has of late disliked the attentions he has paid me. Gascoigne too has lately—no, no, no! I cannot ask him!"

"He will not refuse to sign any bill with you."

"No, no, no, I would rather ask my bitterest enemy than him. He has lately spoken what offended me, and *now* to ask him to assist me in obtaining money without my

husband's knowledge!—And my husband, should he—”

“ He is jealous.”

“ No, no; but he has been uneasy at some whispers he heard lately at one of the clubs—he is not naturally jealous, but—but, should he see such a bill as this—should he see Gascoigne's name and mine!—I cannot, I cannot ask *him* !”

“ Then I cannot make the advance.”

Lady Frankford gave a look of agony.

“ You cannot be in pressing want of money; you have exaggerated your difficulties. It is a common case.”

“ God knows,” cried her ladyship, “ I do not exaggerate my difficulties !” She clasped her hands together, and wept.

The Jew looked at her—and his dark eyes burned again.

“ Perhaps,” resumed he, “ they may appear

to you more formidable than they really are.—
You may exaggerate them to yourself as well
as to me.”

“ No, no,” cried Lady Frankford wildly;
“ I must have money whatever I do.”

“ Let the bill be for a month ; you will be
able to pay it when it falls due.”

“ How?”

“ It is not my province to answer that.
Yet in a month what might not a lovely
woman do?”

“ I see no means—no possible means of
paying it in a month.”

“ I can see many. Success at play—perhaps
a legacy — assistance from a friend—even
chances that cannot be foreseen—many things
may happen in a month.”

“ I will then ask Gascoigne. My husband
loves Madame * * * * ?”

“ He does.”

“ No, no, Walter loves *me*.”

"You are a good wife to think so."

"You said you could shew me proofs."

"I could."

"What are they?"

"You will see them soon."

"I wish I might see them now."

"That you cannot do."

"And the world says I am slighted?"

"It does—and that you are lovely to boot."

"My brain is dizzy."

The noise of an approaching carriage, and the squabbling of two coachmen in the narrow lane, suddenly interrupted the conversation. These sounds were soon followed by another loud knock on the street door. Lady Frankford started and looked alarmed. After a moment's pause, the old woman put her withered face into the room, and retired.

"Be not alarmed," said the Jew, addressing Lady Frankford who had now risen. "To-

morrow let me have the bill, and I shall return the money by the bearer."

"I will, I will," said her ladyship hurriedly, still appearing agitated.

"Shall I conduct you to your coach?"

"No," said the other withdrawing the trembling hand the Jew had taken with something more than an old man's grasp. "I hear my coachman below—the street door is still open—will any one meet me in the lobby?"

"My servant—no other."

"Then good night!" said her ladyship passing from the room.

The Jew repeated the parting words, and remained standing where Lady Frankford had left him. He heard the coach door open—the voice of the coachman—the street door shut, and the sound of the vehicle driving away. "Aye go," muttered he almost aloud, "you are weaving your own shackles. Proud Beauty, ere long you will be my slave!" He pulled the bell,

and threw himself into the cushioned chair again.

The door was thrown open and Madame * * * * * entered. The confusion she had slightly exhibited at her previous visit was now wholly gone. Her step was light and confident. She smiled, and offered her hand to the Jew. He took it readily and they seated themselves together.

She put back her veil from her sparkling eyes, opened her cloak, and drew forth a small casket.

"I have brought my jewels," said she still smiling. "In good truth I am loth to part with them."

"Those eyes of yours will win you more, even if these should not be redeemed. Have you brought the ring?"

"I have," said she ungloving her delicate hand and opening the casket. "It is a paltry trinket after all."

The Jew took it eagerly. His eye ran over it, and brightened.

"And these—these bracelets," continued Madame * * * * * drawing the glittering baubles mournfully to the light.

"I see—they are of value."

"And these diamonds."

"Are of the first water."

"These earrings."

"Keep them."

"Lord * * * * * gave me them."

"Keep them since they are love gifts."

Madame * * * * * laughed.

"I shall wear them then," said she, taking off her bonnet, and fastening the gems in her delicate little ears.

The Jew looked at her with undisguised admiration. She was a beautiful woman. The rich jetty hair, finely formed lips, soft dark eyes, and voluptuous beauty of her whole appearance might have even rivetted the looks of age.

She noticed his glance—many would have been startled at its intensity, but Madame * * * * * was gratified.

“ You will now let me have the sum I asked ?”

“ I will—It was five hundred pounds.”

“ Could you not make it seven—do—I am much in want of money.”

“ You have more jewels than these ?”

“ Not many, in good truth—and those I have retained have more tinsel than value. Lend me seven hundred pounds on these—they are worth twice that sum.”

“ I will, although it is an imprudent loan. Those looks of yours can even fool an old usurer out of his money.”

The Jew took the casket, wrote a check on a city banker, and handed it to her.

“ And now,” said she, “ you promised to tell me the secrets of this gloomy room.”

“ Some of them.”

"I heard silks rustling in the lobby. A lady was with you when I arrived. Was it Lady Frankford? I saw her to-night at the Opera."

"Our confession must be mutual."

"With all my heart."

"Does Sir Walter Frankford still pay his addresses to you?"

"Nay, nay," replied the other smiling, "my question is not answered yet."

"Will you sup with me?"

Madame * * * * * looked surprised, and then laughed outright.

"I will," said she, "I will sup with a usurer—a philosopher—and a Jew "

Her companion pulled the bell.

"Oh! our repast will be in another room?"

The Jew bowed slightly.

The old woman entered with a wax light in a massive silver candlestick.

"I will join you instantly," said the Jew,

addressing Madame * * * * * who looked surprised at the rapidity of the arrangements.

The fair Italian smiled again, and suffered herself to be led by the old woman. They descended to the first floor. The house on closer examination seemed to be of much larger dimensions than its exterior indicated. They entered a sort of gallery. The conductress paused before one of the doors, and threw it open. It was a spacious saloon, elegantly, even luxuriously furnished. The table was covered with massive plate—a repast was already there in style corresponding with the objects around it. A fire was blazing brightly on the hearth—wax lights were burning in various parts of the room, so disposed as to throw a soft glow that added to the luxurious aspect of the chamber. Ere Madame * * * * * recovered from her surprise, the attendant had withdrawn.

She took off her cloak, gave a glance at one

of the mirrors, and seated herself on a silken couch. Her own beauty heightened the effect of the chamber—she seemed a fitting inmate for such a place. Madame * * * * * cast her eyes on an opposite mirror, and such were her own thoughts.

In a few minutes the door was opened, and a young man entered. The Italian started to her feet in renewed surprise, for quick as her eyes caught his features, in his dress and air she recognised the dark stranger she had seen at the Opera. He came nearer, met her startled glance with a look that made the blood rush to her cheek and brow, Madame * * * * * almost shrieked—*it was the Jew!*

CHAPTER III.

“WELL, well, they must go at last, these precious freeholds, strongholds, copyholds, of mine. Two thousand pounds, Mr. Samuel ! they are good security for thirty. Aye, aye, look at them, they are all orthodox, and egad have a genuine savour of antiquity. My great-coat pocket will smell of old parchment for a month.”

“Two thousand pounds.”

“Two thousand pounds, Mr. Samuel, and this evening too; no consultations, procrastinations, and negotiations with lawyers, as if we were settling the peace of Europe; I want the money immediately—that’s the reason I apply to you.”

“You wish to deposit these deeds as security for the sum—an equitable mortgage.”

“I like the word equitable,” said the other—(our old acquaintance Gascoigne) musingly, “but not mortgage—I have an hereditary antipathy to the word—it has something of a passing-bell sound, eh?”

“It may.”

“Yet I am not in a condition to quarrel with it. You may give the transaction any name you like.”

“Two thousand pounds?”

“Ay, ay, you remember the last time I borrowed three hundred pounds of you, you—”

"It is not yet paid. I am not likely to forget it."

"Nor, by the bye, has Frankford paid me. But you remember you then wished to get these deeds. Now you *have* got your clutches on them, and yet you don't seem satisfied."

"You ask a large sum."

"I have told you how large. Why the devil do you hesitate? The estate rents for twelve hundred."

"You are fast squandering it."

"Galloping hard to ruin, eh? Well, well, let me have the money, and I'll go home and read the proverbs of Solomon."

"For what purpose do you wish to borrow this sum?"

"The inquisition again! Why, why, haven't you a rack here, pincers, and thumb screws?"

"They are not required. Gold can command more than ever fear extorted."

"Or *pain*, old gentleman?"

"Or *love*—Ah! you start. What do you want two thousand pounds for?"

"Were I a superstitious man now," said Gascoigne, throwing himself back in his chair, "I *should* think, Mr. Samuel, you had dealings with the Devil. My spirits flag—I neither know why or how—whenever I come in contact with you."

"It is the homage which frivolity pays to wisdom."

"Ah, you are not likely to injure your friends by flattering them."

"The language of panegyric would be oddly applied to you."

"Biting too and cynical—you are one of the most unfathomable men of my acquaintance. Every one who knows you says the same. Gad now, I wonder what sort of fellow you were when you were young."

"You want two thousand pounds?"

"I do, I do; and although its a kind of

secret, I'll tell you why I want it. The Duchess of * * * * *, whom I have met a good deal of late, spoke the other night of storming my beautiful retreat, as she called it, in Essex. It seems she passed Morland Hall lately, and has taken a fancy to admire it. I construed her Royal Highness' hint into a command—as the court papers would term it—and am about to make preparations for her reception, in a style worthy of a guest who may one day sit on the Throne of England. I must give a *fête champêtre*, or some such thing—egad it *must* be outside—and get down a parcel of people to meet her. It is an honour—she intended it as such to me, and as it is one too, she rarely pays, it is certainly a flattering one.”

“ And will cost you two thousand pounds, obtained by mortgage on the very place she visits ?”

“ Why I must own, Mr. Samuel, I should

have been but little elated at the matter, had not Lady Frankford promised to assist me, and consented for that day to play the hostess of Morland Hall."

The Jew gave a look of surprise.

"She objected a good deal at first, but the bill to which I lately lent my name to oblige her, prevented a refusal."

The Jew could not conceal a look of satisfaction.

"She was so much averse to it," continued Gascoigne, "hinted so directly at the objection her husband would feel to it, that I almost reproached myself for pressing it so hard. However, she *has* consented, so there's an end. And to tell the truth, I would rather have her my guest, than all the princesses of Europe."

"When does the fête take place?"

"On the nineteenth. The Duchess fixed it yesterday."

"On that day the bill you alluded to falls due."

"Ah well, I dare say she has provided funds to meet it. How alarmed she was lest Sir Walter should hear of that transaction. She is a sweet creature—isn't she?"

"She is."

"The most beautiful of English beauties, and with a heart too! a warm, honest English heart. We have known each other from childhood. I remember her a girl. She was my first sweetheart."

"See that she be not your last."

"No, no—Frankford *does* seem suspicious though, but—but—"

"He owes you three hundred pounds."

"No, no, hang it, no," said Gascoigne blushing at the conscious meanness of his errant thought. "Frankford is a good fellow—almost as great a fool as myself."

"You would fain make him a greater."

"No, no, you mistake the matter, Mr. Samuel. I love Lady Frankford I confess, —may I would even tell her husband, tell all the world I do. It is the attachment of friendship, of a brother, of,—of—"

"The most dangerous of all attachments."

"How?"

"Because almost the only one which, in England at least, is productive of evil."

"How, so?"

"In other countries a wife may have a lover, in this, she can only have a friend, or, as you ingeniously term it, one who feels towards her the attachment of a brother."

"Well."

"In other countries a husband is jealous of his friend; here, it would make him ridiculous. For with the friend, it is a point of honour, and with the wife, one so guarded by calamitous consequences, as to leave little for that honor being required."

“Where then is the danger?”

“In the intercourse which puts no fetters on communion, and where no danger is feared—which reposes confidence, and adopts the title of friendship, where, were it another’s case, a woman would laugh at the word.”

“This is but the consciousness of security.”

“Crime creeps upon security even faster than on weakness.”

“Your words have meanings which I do not catch.”

“I do not doubt it; it is more difficult to see our own case, than that of another.”

“Nay, nay, you allude to cases where friendship is only the mask of artifice.”

“No. The absence of design when really mutual, often leads to frailty where the most refined artifice would have failed—yet that is *not* your case.”

"How?—You puzzle one with these cursed, cold-blooded aphorisms."

"You *are* employing artifice."

"Artifice!"

"I do not expect you to acknowledge it. You are disguising it even from yourself."

"And for what purpose am I employing artifice?"

"For one which moral men would call the worst of purposes—but no matter, go on in your course, pursue it. Yet mark me," continued the Jew with sudden excitement, "see that a craftier spirit does not wrest the prize from your grasp. You wish two thousand pounds?"

"I do," said Gascoigne, looking like one confused.

The Jew, without further words, wrote out a memorandum relative to the deeds, and a bill, and then handed them over to his companion. Gascoigne ran his eye over them and

attached his signature to both. The Jew then gave him a check for two thousand pounds.

"And now," continued he, as Gascoigne was putting the check into his pocketbook. "I should like a card to this fête of yours, for a foreigner, a friend of mine."

"A client—under obligations, eh?"

"He is."

"A foreigner too—poor devil!"

"Can he have a card?"

"Yes, yes, the Duchess has not usurped all the privileges of royalty. What is your friend's name?"

"Address Signor Grazzia—to my care."

"I will; and now just pull the bell—my groom by this time is fast asleep in the cab—dreaming of the pot-houses in Oxford street.—Here comes the wonted slippered step! and—a light—Good night!—I'll not forget your friend."

The day of the fête arrived. It was a bright and sunny one. Carriage after carriage drove up to Morland Hall, the lawn and beautiful grounds were in their richest verdure; choice exotics, rustic *bijouterie*, quaint devices, music and statuary, all were there.—Ladies strayed about the paths, gentlemen sauntered from room to room; some hung over prints, others over flowers, and others “improved the shining hour” by the side of beauty. The Duchess moved from place to place, smiling and being smiled upon, pleased and giving pleasure, speaking broken English, eating ices, and taking patronizing care of a young lady with auburn hair by whom she was attended.

Lady Frankford played her part gracefully and well. She looked the beau-ideal of the young hostess and the lovely wife. The Duchess, to whom she was but slightly known, was fascinated by her manners, and with the freedom of her country, and the privilege of

her rank, complimented her on her beauty. And beautiful indeed she seemed, as she moved with a light and queen-like step through those shady walks, and the courteous ease with which she attended to all. Gascoigne was enchanted—fascinated more than he had ever been before—he saw her in a situation which had an endearment of its own—she was acting as the hostess to his guests—there was a secret sympathy with each other, occasioned by the relation temporary as it was. Often did his eye follow her, and never did their glances meet without the wish rising fervently in his heart, that she was indeed the mistress of the grounds she trode on.

A young man whose name no one knew—and Gascoigne had forgotten—handsome, but dark-complexioned like a foreigner, moved about the flaunting crowd. His manner was cold and self-possessed—haughty as a Spaniard and reserved as an Englishman. He looked

upon the objects around him with an unconcern approaching to contempt, and only spoke when he was addressed. Ladies glanced at him often, but furtively ; and gentlemen when they met him in the path shewed by the expression of their features, that instinctive respect, which some faces, even of felons, have the power of commanding. The day passed away. The Duchess and most of the party had departed, but a few lingered still. The sun set, and the moon which had long been risen shone yellow and clear, mellowed the lingering twilight ; Lady Frankford stood beside a small wicket-gate from which a carriage had just driven away—The young man, who during the day had created such general attention, approached her—No one was near—He raised his hat courteously and gracefully, and almost in the act, slipped a letter into her hand. Surprised at this, as well as at the sudden manner in which it was done, she looked from the letter—

which she saw at a glance was addressed to herself—to the bearer of it ; but he had already passed the gate, and vaulting into a handsome cab, waiting for him at some distance ; ere she had recovered from her surprise, the light vehicle with its proud pacing horse, glided rapidly away. She heard footsteps near her, and hurriedly thrusting the unopened letter into her reticule, looked round to see who approached—It was Gascoigne. He held out his hand—she took it cordially—he drew her arm within his own, and they moved through the shady path together.

With gratitude fervent and sincere, he thanked her for the part she had acted—praised almost with enthusiasm the manner in which she had sustained its troublesome duties—it was a sweet calm night ;—there was witchery in the hour and from expressions of thanks and praise, his words imperceptibly passed to those of admiration and love.

Lady Frankford's fair brow darkened, and her look changed to one of reproach. "This is language," said she, "which I must not listen to—It is your second offence."

"No, not the second? nor the third, nor the thirtieth time I have told you that I loved you. In childhood, boyhood, and in manhood I have loved you—long, long, before you bore another's name—and here, now," continued Gascoigne with fervour. "I tell you again that I love and worship you."

"Nay, nay, this must continue no longer," said Lady Frankford. "Do not let us quarrel;—I will not say this is ungenerous of you, because I know you would feel such an accusation acutely, but it is wrong, very wrong, here too, to take advantage of—Do not continue this—I would fain not quarrel with you—Nay, no more!—I must hear no more."

"Clara, dearest Clara—let me call you by that name again," said Gascoigne taking her

hand and pressing it to his lips. "Nay forgive me—do not turn away," continued he sinking on his knee and covering the hand he held with fervent kisses.

"Rise, Sir!" cried Lady Frankford agitated and alarmed. "Some one will approach."

"Fear not, dear Clara—we should hear a leaf stir in a night like this."

"Rise, for Heaven's sake!—Let us quit this place."

"Yet hear me—at least forgive."

"Do not continue this," said the other with emotion. "Do not continue what my duty as a wife, my honour as a woman—and from you too forbids—Our mothers were bosom friends—your only sister died with her hand locked in mine, oh do not—do not continue language like this—My husband is your friend."

"Your husband," said Gascoigne bitterly, "neglects you."

"No!" cried Lady Frankford suddenly.

"This is base! you are base to him and me."

"Clara," said Gascoigne humbled, "I do not speak it with a wish to deceive. If I thought Walter Frankford loved you, as you deserved to be loved—if I believed that you, whom from my boyhood until now I have never ceased to love—were happy and contented I should not have offended as I have done;—but when I see and know that others share his regard, that you, whom my very soul doats upon, whose image is dearer to me than all the pleasures this world can give—whom my heart worships—that you are slighted, forsaken."

"Oh! this is base, most base!" cried Lady Frankford indignantly, "cruel to me, and treacherous to your friend—nay, sir, this language *must* cease. I am already dishonoured by having listened to it so long."

She left him. Gascoigne stood on the spot,

humbled and spirit-sunken. Conscience whispered him he had acted dishonorably to his friend, and unworthily even cruelly to her he loved. His mind became confused, yet in bitterness of heart, he felt himself humiliated. He turned to seek Lady Frankford, but was told that her carriage was gone.

The City clock struck a late hour as Lady Frankford drove through its silent thoroughfare from the Essex road towards the west part of London. On arriving at * * * * square, she was met in the lobby by her waiting woman, who with looks of some concern handed her a letter. "Has Sir Walter been here?" she hurriedly enquired.

"He has, my lady, and I never saw him in such a way. John told me he goes down to Brighton this very night, and does not return for a week. John—"

But Lady Frankford passed on, and entering her room, without sitting down, tore open the letter.

It was from her husband—evidently written under great excitement—upbraiding her for going down to Essex, and in terms of undisguised bitterness alluding to whispers which were now afloat regarding her. It added that he was compelled to start that night on urgent business to Brighton, where he would probably remain for a week—Lady Frankford sank into a chair lonely and unhappy. The letter grated painfully on her feelings; the reproach—the suspicion of her husband, and perhaps even more than that, continued whispers of the world stung her to the heart—She thought too of her husband's alleged infidelity—of the scene with Gascoigne, and then suddenly remembered the letter which had been given her by the stranger in the garden. She searched for it and broke the seal. It was as follows.

“Your and Mr. Edward Gascoigne's joint note to Reuben Samuel for eight hundred

pounds, falls due to-day, to which your attention is respectfully requested."

A thrill of terror ran through her heart. A month gone already!—The bill had been forgotten.

She rang for her attendant—sent *her* off instantly for a coach; and wrapping herself up in a travelling cloak, escaped from the house unobserved, and drove to the Jew's residence.

He was prepared to receive her—nay was even waiting for her. She was ushered into his presence, and entered without timidity or alarm—anxiety had banished both. "Oh! Mr. Samuel," said she as soon as the attendant had withdrawn. "I have just this moment perused your letter—The month then has expired?"

"So I have informed your ladyship."

"But cannot you, cannot you wait a little longer," said Lady Frankford, throwing back

the cloak from her fluttering bosom, for the night was warm, and she was fevered and troubled.

"No, the bill tells its own terms. You have neglected them."

"Oh, I have forgotten—put off the consideration of it from time to time—but a week—perhaps in that time—and yet—" said she pausing suddenly, "I do not see how even then—must the money be paid now?"

"Undoubtedly. If not paid to-night, I must apply to Sir Walter Frankford to-morrow."

"No, no, no!" cried Lady Frankford, "not to him—if he knew that such a bill was in existence I, I—"

"Nay I cannot lose eight hundred pounds. Cannot you procure the money?"

"No, no, not now—but, but—"

"What! will none of those gentle friends,

those titled ladies, who press you by the hand when you part—kiss your brow when you meet—hang on your arm at Almacks—rustle by your side at court—will none of those save you by lending you a few hundred pounds?"

"No, not one!" cried Lady Frankford in agony.

"No lady—they will hear of your ruin—of your disgrace perhaps--and outbid each other for your workbox—or perhaps, kind souls, send an advertisement to the Morning Post with a list of subscribers charitably disposed to assist a lady of rank in indigent circumstances. Ah! it is the usurer alone, that sees life without its mask."

"Why, why, tell me that!" said Lady Frankford in increased agitation and distress.

"Your husband goes to-night to Brighton."

"How do you know it!" cried the other in surprise.

"You one day asked me for proofs of his infidelity—look at this ring—do you know the gem?"

"I do, I do," said the terror-stricken wife seizing it with trembling hands.

"Your dark brown tress has been replaced by one the colour of the raven's wing. Its owner sings to-night at Brighton."

"Nay!" cried Lady Frankford with an angry flush mounting to her cheek. "This is some subtle trick."

"Trick lady! They are poor gamblers in life's hazards who have recourse to tricks. The strings that command human action need no juggler's hand to pull. Read that letter—your husband explains there to the lady the purpose of his visit. She is a crafty spirit, and gives him room to hope."

The blood flew from Lady Frankford's cheek, as her eye ran over the letter—she sat for a moment as if stunned.

"Now, lady, do you still doubt the old Jew? Ah, there is something in those flashing eyes that tell me you have spirit enough to revenge your wrongs. You have youth, beauty, and every charm which a woman loves in herself, and hates another for possessing. Your rivals are many, but, why disguise it, your wealth, your means of triumph are gone."

Lady Frankford pressed her hands to her throbbing forehead.

"Nay, you heed me not," said the Jew. "How is the bill to be paid?"

"Wait—wait for a week," cried Lady Frankford imploringly.

"You fear your husband still?"

"Do not speak of him," said the other shuddering.

"Shall I demand payment of the bill from him?"

"No, no, for Heaven's sake! in mercy do not!"

"Mercy is the Christians' creed—they ask it, but they give it not."

"It will ruin me for ever. My husband is jealous and impetuous. My honor, although I am sinless, is in your hands."

"There is but one way I will consent to forego the claim."

"Speak it! name it!" cried Lady Frankford eagerly.

"You visited the seat of one lover to-day—to-morrow you must visit mine."

Lady Frankford gave a look of surprise.

"I have a villa in Surry, a sweet spot. Nay, I am no boy to speak in sighs, but the old Jew loves you! Start not lady, I ask no love in return. Dotard as I am, I am yet wise enough to know, that love from you to such as me, never can be given. Love has been rarely accorded by beauty in answer to an old man's prayer. For power, state, wealth, its semblance may have been. These I offer you

—My coffers will enable you to revenge your husband's slight—my age will shut the mouth of scandal—The old usurer can buy the bauble his heart longs for.”

Lady Frankford looked as if spell bound—she became paler, her lips quivered, and her restless eyes seemed turned on vacancy. The Jew watched her, as the rattlesnake looks upon its prey.

“ You hesitate,” said he. “ Now look on the other side of the picture. Never once have I listened to a debtor's prayer for forbearance, were I to do so, I might soon paper my apartments with unpaid bills—Reject my terms and I treat this as I would another debt, and without a day's delay sue your husband for the amount—choose.”

Lady Frankford rose—her blanched lips were silent, though her flashing eyes betrayed the sudden anger that was burning in her mind. But they encountered a glance that

did not shrink. Keen, fiery, as the eagle's, it met her own, as if it would read her soul. A look of fear and anguish once more appeared upon her features, and with her hands clasped in agony she sank into the chair again. She pressed them wildly to her face—the tears began to trickle through her white fingers—her head seemed drooping—her bosom fluttered violently, then all was still—for she had fainted!

CHAPTER IV.

THE Jew pulled the bell, and the iron-visaged sibyl, who acted as his domestic, hastily answered the summons. She gave a look of surprise at the drooping attitude of his lovely visitor, and hurriedly observing that her ladyship's attendant was below, said she would call her to her mistress' assistance. The words seemed to arouse Lady Frankford to consciousness. She opened her eyes languidly, and

with an evident effort waved her hand to countermand the proposal. The Jew understood the signal and glanced towards his servant. The woman withdrew in silence.

Lady Frankford looked for a moment as if she doubted the reality of her situation. Her eyes ran restlessly over the room, she was deadly pale, and offended pride still lingered haughtily on the expression of her lips. But the cold calm glance that met her own—fixed and withering as the fabled evil eye—made her shrink as it were within herself; and proud as her nature was she trembled.

“Has your ladyship resolved?” demanded the Jew.

“Wait!—wait but a day!” cried Lady Frankford with renewed agitation.

“You have not then resolved.”

“No, no! I cannot speak—I cannot *think*!” exclaimed the unhappy woman again pressing her hand to her forehead.

"Then, lady, listen. One day, and *one only* will I wait. Nay, give me no thanks—I do it per force. You are too much agitated now to know the full extent of the evils you would brave. Mark me, lady, I wait a day—but if to-morrow—if before twelve o'clock to-morrow night you do not signify assent—then, the die is cast."

Lady Frankford clasped her hands.

"On Thursday your husband will be at Frankford Court, where he will expect a fair visitor. Nay, nay, lady, it will not be his wife."

"Dark, crafty man," cried Lady Frankford passionately, "in mercy spare me hearing my husband's name."

"You must needs hear it now—in future I shall be sparing of it. On Thursday—I shall so order it—that Sir Walter Frankford is at his country-house—the distance from town is convenient. Aye—you look surprised—I have

the power of doing this, and if you tamper with your fate until then," continued the Jew with kindling eyes. "I will go thither myself, present the bill and demand payment of the debt. Then, lady, hug your virtue to your bosom, exult in conscious innocence under the world's pointing finger and your rival's pitying look, with poverty and reproach attending you in retirement, obloquy and scorn hooting you from public haunts—if in a month you come not to me as a suppliant—if that sickly honour which now so affects you be not then—but pshaw! these are not the honied words of love." And the Jew laughed. The sound was not joyous. It was fierce and startling. Lady Frankford shuddered, for it seemed as though a fiend had laughed in mockery.

"Aye," continued the Jew, "I am garrulous to-night. You look upon the dark wainscot, the dull room, and an old man whose laughter startles you. Yet, lady, I have the

power to change the scene—chambers that a palace might contain—wealth, luxury, and magnificence are within these walls; and the cynic who sits before you can appear in another guise. But enough of this—you are still agitated. Ah! you rise—let me hand you to your coach. Nay then, I shall summon your own attendant.”

Lady Frankford reached home and retired to her room. Her features, reflected in the mirror, made the blood run coldly through her heart, they startled her with their aspect of suffering. She was ill, her brain still dizzy, and her mind and body exhausted with excitement and fatigue. It had been a long and a trying day. She retired to rest, but a load of anguish still pressed upon her mind; the scenes she had passed through rose before her like gloomy pictures; they haunted her even when reason refused to grapple with them. Wearied nature sunk at last; but the morning

sun was shining bright and warm through the curtained windows of her chamber, ere broken slumber stole upon her pillow, and relieved her, not by repose, but by breaking for a while the chain of consciousness.

Bitter was her wakening. The abyss on the brink of which she seemed to stand—her embarrassments, unknown to her husband—her last imprudent act, that of connecting another with these, and the threatened consequences to which that act had given rise, awoke like so many stings to torture her. She remained in her own room, and suffered a great part of the day to pass away without coming to any resolution. How her heart yearned to throw herself upon her husband's bosom ! confess all, and ask forgiveness. But the wish fell back again like ice upon her heart ; her husband had deserted her. The hours glided slowly by. At length alarm overcame indecision. Painful as was the alterna-

tive she resolved to acquaint Gascoigne with her situation. The step was a perilous one, an outrage to her own feelings, yet it was the only course which seemed capable of saving her from destruction. She remembered too his generous, manly character—the real friendship which had subsisted between them—but it was no time for fresh doubts, with a trembling hand she wrote a note and sent it by a messenger to Morland Hall.

It was almost midnight ere Gascoigne arrived. Lady Frankford received him, and told him all—all of the Jew but nothing of her husband. Horror-stricken at what he heard, he promptly volunteered to endeavour to get up the fatal document. His feelings took a new turn. The recital he listened to seemed to hold a mirror up to his own previous act, and reveal its baseness. He had met her almost believing that the suit he formerly urged was won, he parted from her as a brother leaves a sister's.

side—regretting with the bitterness of shame that he had ever assailed her pure and gentle bosom with words unworthy of virtue to hear. His love, his honour, the natural chivalry of his character, flattered by the confidence she still reposed in him, made his heart lighter, and the pleasure he felt more pure and gladdening than ever resulted from that wretched conquest which robs love of its dearest attributes, and changes the name of lover, to conquerer and destroyer.

But the pleasure he experienced was shortlived. It was blasted by another cause. The Jew was not at home—would be absent until to-morrow evening—so his servant said. Gascoigne was at his wit's end. As well as the bill, his title deeds, upon which alone he could obtain any sum, were in the Jew's hands. Mortifying, maddening as was this unlooked for check, he was compelled to acquaint Lady Frankford with it. She tried to conceal her agitation;

Gascoigne saw that a witness aggravated her distress, and took leave with a heavy heart, and in the feeble hope of still being able to avert the doom which awaited her.

Soon after he was gone a servant arrived from Frankford Court with a letter from her husband. Sir Walter had arrived there that afternoon. The Jew's words flashed upon her mind like a prophecy fulfilled. In agony and terror another hour was passed, when another note was put into her hands—she tore it open and read—

“It is past midnight. You have dared me, and braved your fate.—*It is sealed.*”

“Then I am ruined!” cried Lady Frankford, crushing the note in her trembling hands.

At a late hour that night a postchaise with four smoking horses stopped at the entrance to the narrow lane in which the Jew had his residence Madame * * * * *, alighted and after whis-

pering some orders to the servant who stood by the carriage door, proceeded up the lane. The man touched his hat, remounted the dickey, and the carriage drove on.

But she had not alighted unperceived. One whom the fair Italian would have shrieked at seeing there—a tall, dark man passing hurriedly along the city thoroughfare—for the trickling drops of rain, and the dark black sky, presaged a torrent—caught a glimpse of her as he approached, and concealing himself under the shadow of a projecting corner, watched her. He saw her leave the carriage, he followed her guilty step—he saw her enter the Jew's house, and took up his station near it. A long hour passed. He heard the sound of music, and her own silvery tones; the heavy showers fell pitilessly, the storm came on, the lightning flashed fiercely around him, the thunder vibrated in loud echoes amid the tall city buildings, and the sheets of rain, drifted,

as it were, upon the sweeping wind ; yet still he watched.—*It was her husband.*

The beautiful Italian sat with the Jew in the magnificent chamber in which she had first seen him in the guise of youth. An elegant banquet had been prepared, the tapers gleamed brightly, it was an hour of revelry, but luxurious and refined. Madame * * * * * now admired the dark, crafty spirit she at first had trembled at, his brilliant sarcasm, fierce passions, and fearless mind, had charms for her ardent and impetuous nature—she was animated, there was a flush upon her cheek ; and her eyes, those glorious black eyes, *yeux revolutionnaires*, as a Parisian audience so aptly termed them—beamed with love and flashed again.

“ You leave England to-morrow,” said the Jew. “ I drink to a happy voyage across the Channel, and beating hearts in France—Sir

Walter Frankford waits for you at his country seat ?”

Madame * * * * * smiled—“ I have aided you to ruin a rival, and yet I almost repent it.”

“ Why my queen of hearts ?”

“ My rivalry was formerly ill placed—it has increased with my revenge. You loved this fair brow'd beauty better than me.”

The Jew laughed—“ I pledge you again,” said he, “ and may the gilded virgin which your grandam worshipped, drive such phantasies from your brain.”

Madame * * * * * seated herself before a handsome piano. Her white fingers ran over the ivory keys, the exquisite music trembled in the room and blended with the noise of the torrent that poured without.

“ Hah ! what sound was that ?” said the Italian pausing suddenly.

“ Some carriage in the street.”

"No, no, I saw a flash, it lightened—It is a dreadful night."

"To sailors that keep watch—to us it is a sweet one. Do not pause."

"I cannot sing more—I feel depressed—see again!" cried she turning pale.

A flash glared even into the lighted room, followed by a startling peal. The sound broke into long heavy echoes, then died away. The rain fell again in louder torrents.

The storm continued to encrease—the vivid flashes pierced the darkness in quicker succession, and peal succeeded peal as if the city were doomed.

Another hour had been spent in that guilty mansion when the coachman's knock warned Madame * * * * * that the time she had prescribed herself was expired. The Jew led her to the coach and handed her in. "We shall meet in Paris," said the lady as she seated herself. "We shall," said the Jew. The door

shut and the vehicle drove away. The Jew turned to re-enter the house, for the rain still kept pouring, when a tall figure came suddenly forward from the darkness and confronted him.

"I would speak with you," said the stranger.

"To-morrow," said the Jew.

"My business is urgent."

"It is late, I can see no one."

"My errand will not admit of delay," replied the other in a husky tone. "I must speak with you now."

"Enter then."

They reached the dull narrow chamber in which the Jew usually received his visitors. He glanced at the intruder and pointed to a chair. It was not accepted. The stranger's look was wild—and his long dark hair straightened by the rain, made his features seem haggard. His dress was also soiled and wet, yet neither this nor the excitement of his

manner could wholly hide the attributes of a gentleman.

“ A lady this moment left your house.”

The Jew bowed haughtily.

“ What was her errand here?”

A look of angry surprise was the only reply.

“ She is my wife!—answer me,” cried the other fiercely.

The Jew started.

“ Ah you start! you will not answer that,” cried the Frenchman with increased excitement.

“ I am a money lender and betray no secrets.”

“ False! it is false!” shouted the other. “ I hold you to be a villain—will you meet me to-morrow ?”

The Jew had regained his composure. “ My ancestors,” said he, “ never rode in lists nor subscribed to the laws of chivalry.

“Coward! villain!” cried the indignant foreigner rushing forward.

But quick as thought the Jew touched a spring in the table by his side, a drawer flew open and a pistol lay beneath his hand. He started to his feet, and levelled it at his assailant, “Madman!” cried he, “another step and I fire!”

The Frenchman’s eyes sparkled, and his chest heaved with passion. He paused, yet looked as though he would dash forward and dare the weapon which was pointed at him. The Jew cocked it. His brow grew dark—“Advance,” said he, “and your blood be on your head.”

The Frenchman gnashed his teeth.

“Retire,” said the Jew. “Linger but another moment and I summon the police.”

He pulled the bell. The slow slippered step approached, the door was thrown open, the woman held it in her hand, in the other she

carried a light. The Frenchman muttered " we shall meet again," and left the house.

He was a man of noble character but strong ungovernable passions. He had loved the beautiful songstress ardently, and in spite of the entreaties of his friends—for he was descended from a princely though a ruined house—in spite of his own knowledge of many a stain on her reputation, he had married her. Jealousy, distrust and wretchedness were the results of such a union—They were now roused to frenzy.

The sun scattered the dark clouds and shone brightly on the wakened city; bustling sounds and busy faces filled its streets again, cabs and carriages drove through the splashing lanes, but still the Frenchman lingered near the house. About ten o'clock a groom brought a cab to the door. The foreigner advanced and interrogated him. The youth looked suspiciously at the haggard aspect

Of him who questioned—the Frenchman took out his purse, and put gold after gold into his hand, the groom touched his hat, stammered out answers, as he guessed or knew. The questioner left him.

There is a spot on the Essex road which travellers hate, but painters admire. It is not our business to describe it here. Let it suffice to state, that it is an abrupt ascent, which commands a view on one side of Frankford Court, and on the other of the chimneys of Morland Hall.

The birds were singing merrily amid the glittering leaves of the deep plantations on either side, the noon-day sun was flashing on the full bright streamlet that skirting the hill, poured down to the narrow bridge that spanned it in the valley below ; when a young man driving a handsome cab, with the hood drawn down, reined in his chafing horse at the top of

the hill, and made him move with slower steps. The animal seemed anxious to quicken his pace, and fretted with the curb until the blood appeared upon his foamy bit; but his driver kept his neck curved with the tight reins and compelled him to descend leisurely. There was a flush of excitement on the young man's features, and an expression of severity unnatural to his years. Drawing the reins yet tighter, he raised his hat as if the cool air of the valley was grateful to him, when at that instant the quick report of a pistol rang in the wood, a ball whistled through the green boughs, the horse swerved and dashed furiously down the hill. The reins dropped from the driver's hand, he hung for a moment from the vehicle as if lifeless—the ball had pierced his temples. Another moment, and a second report was heard, the flying horse made a second startled bound; the cab was dashed to

splinters, and the driver lay mangled and bleeding at the foot of the hill.

* * * * *

The storm of yesterday had been succeeded by a day of summer calm. Evening was approaching. The high blue sky that arched the far spread city was without a cloud, the golden sun shone warm and gladdening, there was serenity on earth and heaven.

Lady Frankford, faint and enfeebled, was reclining on a sofa in her own lonely apartment, when she was startled by the clatter of horses' hoofs on the pavement under the window. She rose and stood for a moment as if rooted to the spot. Her heart beat loudly. "It is my husband!" she murmured, convulsively clasping her hands.

A servant entered with a letter—She looked eagerly towards the window—Gascoigne's groom had just ridden away.

She tore open the letter, and read ;—

“ My dear Lady Frankford.

“ I have just time to scrawl these lines and enclose the document which you were anxious to obtain. I was hastily summoned to Morland Hall about two hours ago in consequence of the following tragical occurrence. Samuel the Jew (on his way no doubt to Frankford Court where Sir Walter is at present) was thrown from his gig this forenoon at the bottom of * * * hill, his horse having taken fright it is supposed at the report of a pistol in the wood—a person who has not yet been identified having done me the unpleasant honour of shooting himself on my grounds. The Jew’s forehead was dashed against some loose stones, and he was killed on the spot. A gamekeeper of mine was the first to reach the place after this double tragedy occurred, and took upon himself the duty of inspecting the

pockets of both the deceased. He called me aside, about half an hour ago, and put the enclosed bill into my hands, observing that he believed it was something of mine. I was hardly in a situation to examine very narrowly into the matter.

"I send you the bill in the meantime, and will draw a moral from it when I have more leisure. At present my house is full of people.

"Yours ever sincerely,

"Dear Lady Frankford,

"EDWARD GASCOIGNE."

"Morland Hall. Thursday.

Lady Frankford tore the promissary note bearing the joint signature of herself and Gascoigne to atoms, and stamped her foot upon it. A flush rose to her pale cheek, she clenched her white hand with angry triumph,

laughed hysterically, and then throwing herself on the sofa again, wept as if her heart would break !

The following day an inquest was held on the bodies of the foreigner and the Jew. Evidence of the former's excited manner on the morning of the accident was adduced ; the jury returned a verdict of temporary insanity. The body was never identified, the name was never known. On the Jew, their verdict was " accidental death."

That day Sir Walter Frankford met his injured wife. She was armed with the knowledge of his indiscretions ; — she reproached him passionately, but without bitterness. Frankford was gay and thoughtless, but nature had not been niggardly of his qualities of heart. He had been fooled by a woman whom vanity had made him follow ; and had trifled with the affections of a wife, whom he had ever loved. He was a willing penitent to

a welcome bosom ;—the past was forgiven and forgotten ; but its influence did not pass away. He was checked on ruin's threshold, and she who had been imperceptibly led to the brink of a yet darker abyss, gladly fled the tasteless whirl of fashion to be his monitor and his guide.

Better days dawned ;—the gambling-house was forsaken, his shattered fortunes were attempted to be repaired ; the death of an uncle soon after enabled him to do this—and Frankford with his infant children prattling at his knees, and his young and lovely wife sharing and returning his glad smile, again can speak like a sage of the miseries of the libertine. Their hearth is a happy one.

Gascoigne had followed his friend to do evil—and they retraced their steps together. He obtained, with some difficulty, his title deeds again, improved his estate, wiped off his debts, and married a fair girl ;—the loveliest wife in

Essex;—a younger sister of Lady Frankford's. The families live in friendship,—the world envies them because they do not envy the world.

Madame * * * * * is singing in Italy.

CHRONICLE SECOND.

THE

PAWNBROKER'S WINDOW.

F 5

THE PAWNBROKER'S WINDOW.

CHAPTER I.

" All the sad variety of woe."

THOMPSON.

THERE is more philosophy of life to be learned at a Pawnbroker's window, than in all the libraries in the world. The maxims and dogmas which wise men have chronicled, disturb the mind for a moment as the breeze ruffles the surface of the deep, still stream, and pass away ; but there is something in the melancholy grouping of a Pawnbroker's window, which like a record of ruin sinks into the heart. The

household Gods—the cherished relics—the sacred possessions affection bestowed, or eyes now closed in death had once looked upon as their own—are here as it were profaned :—the associations of dear old times are here violated—the family hearth is here outraged—the ties of love—kindred—rank—all that the heart clings to are broken here ; it is a sad picture, for in spite of the glittering show, its associations are sombre.

There hangs the watch, the old chased repeater, that hung above the head of a dying parent when bestowing his trembling blessing on the poor outcast who parted with it for bread ;—the Widow's wedding ring is there, the last and dearest of all her possessions ;—the trinket—the pledge of love of one now dead, the only relict of the heart's fondest memories—silver that graced the holiday feast, the gilt framed miniature that used to hang over the quiet mantel shelf—the flute, the favorite of a

dead son, surrendered by a starving mother—to procure food for her remaining offspring—the locket that held a father's hair:—or gloomer still, the dress, the very covering of the poor is there, waving like the flag of wretchedness and misery.

It is a strange, sad sight;—to those who feel aright, there are more touching memorials to be seen at a Pawnbroker's window, than in all the monuments in Westminster Abbey.

At no great distance from Limehouse, about eight years ago, there was a Pawnbroker's shop which had many customers, and to judge by the mingled collection which filled its window they were of every rank and condition of life. The shop had a high narrow door, a dim abrupt entrance, and looked like a dusty spider's web to entangle the flies of a poor neighbourhood.

It had a designing look. A baker's was next door, a grocer's on the other side, and when

the sun shone upon them the two latter had an honest hearty appearance, but the former with all its glitter seemed to wear a sardonic smile. Yet let not the business of a Pawnbroker be judged too harshly, since, if he follow his calling honestly, he is one of the most useful members of society, as but for him the last crumbs of life would often be withheld from the lips of misery.

One cold wet night, about the time already mentioned, there were three persons lingering near the Pawnbroker's. It was quite dark and the rain falling fast, and pattering loudly in the deserted street. Each of the three appeared anxious to enter the shop, but was restrained by the presence of another already there. They were all waiting until the shop was empty, and although they did not speak to each other, each seemed to understand the other's errand, and with the morbid pride of poverty to wish to execute their own unnoticed and alone.

One of these was an old man whose drooping attitude, feeble step, and the abject look which his features expressed when he turned them towards the light, proclaimed him most dejected of the three. He was shabbily dressed, his long gray hair hung over his hollow cheeks, and his almost shoeless feet were soaked with the rain.

He was the first to enter the shop. With a trembling hand he drew a metal watch from his pocket. The pawnbroker rapidly uncased it, and after a word or two laid a few shillings on the counter. The old man gathered them up, and hurried out of the place as if anxious to remove himself from such a scene. He was succeeded in the shop by another of those who had been lingering near it, waiting until it was empty ; a poor looking woman wrapped in a gray cloak. She entered with a timid, flurried look, drew a worn silver spoon from

her pocket, received a small sum in exchange, and glided from the shop as stealthily as she had entered.

The last of the three was now left alone. It was a young woman poorly dressed, she appeared more agitated than any of the others had been, and once or twice wrung her hands as if in agony of thought. As she drew near the shop the light that fell upon her features showed that although pale and sorrow-worn they were of touching beauty—while her youth (she could not be more than twenty) increased the interest which her evident distress of mind was calculated to inspire. She reached the door—her hand was raised to open it, but she shrank back again, and drawing a little miniature from her bosom looked at it wistfully by the light of the window; the tears started to her large blue eyes—she kissed the portrait, and thrusting it again into her bosom, passed

on. She walked a few yards—then paused—then proceeded—then came back again.—There was now another customer in the shop, she had once more to pass on. It was still raining heavily, the November wind was sweeping the dark street, and the cold blasts were piercing; yet the young woman heeded them not; the struggle which was evidently going on in her own mind rendered her insensible to the miseries of the scene around her.

Again she came to the pawnbroker's door. The shop was now empty, but again she appeared to hesitate. At that instant the clock of a neighbouring church struck eight. She started at the sound, and without another symptom of irresolution entered the door-way. She drew out the miniature and laid it on the counter. The pawnbroker took it up and held it to the light. It was the portrait of a young sailor, and mounted in gold. The man looked at it for a moment—examined the painting

with a sort of careless curiosity, but the gold which surrounded it with more attention.

“How much do you wish on this?” said he addressing the young woman.

“A sovereign,” was the reply.

The man looked at her keenly. She blushed. He examined the trinket again. “A sovereign” repeated he as if musing. “Did you purchase this miniature yourself?”

“No,” said she in an unsteady voice. “It was given to me.”

The man eyed her suspiciously. Her dress soiled with the rain, her tattered bonnet and pale face seemed to him at variance with the nature of such a present. She looked distressed and held out her hand to receive the offered pledge again. The hand was white and delicate—the voice was mournful and soft—the manner in which she addressed him, although timid, was gentle and ladylike;—the Pawnbroker said within himself “She has not

stolen it." A sovereign and a duplicate were handed her—the miniature was put aside—she looked for a moment anxiously after it, then drawing her wet, faded shawl over her still colder bosom, departed with a look of grief.

She walked hurriedly on—the lamps she passed shewed that her eyes were filled with tears—and again she wrung her hands;—she entered a more narrow and desolate looking region, the lamps there were nearly all extinguished by the wind, and there was no shop to send a glare into the street. She proceeded to one of the houses, knocked gently, and was admitted. In a few moments she came out again with a small basket in her hand, and proceeded towards the more frequented part of this quarter of the town.

When she returned a stranger followed her. He kept himself some distance behind, as if anxious not to be seen;—but he followed her step for step, and watched the house

she entered. He was a tall man, wrapped closely up in a dark great-coat, with his hat drawn forward over his eyes.. No sooner did the young woman disappear than he left the street.

She ascended to a small room on the second floor. It was poor and scantily furnished, but had a look of order and neatness. There were two beds in the room, on one of which a woman, apparently an invalid, was lying, and on the other some articles of female dress were scattered. There was a small but bright fire in the grate;—the invalid slept.

The young woman threw off her shawl and bonnet, opened the basket she had brought, and took out some tea, wine, sugar, and bread. In a few minutes she prepared a glass of warm negus and a slice of toast; and with these she approached the bed. Laying her hand softly on the sleeper's shoulder she whispered
"Mother!"

"Nance, my poor Nance," said the other languidly opening her eyes; "these long watchings will kill you. Kiss me, Nance, and go to rest. Poor girl, you have hardly tasted food to-day."

"Mother," said Nance, "let me assist you to sit up. Here is what will do you good. I heard you murmur for it in your sleep."

The invalid put the negus to her mouth. The parched lips, the dry fevered throat were refreshed, and an expression of pleasure lit up the pale sharp features.

Nance knelt beside the bed, and as she watched her parent, a smile of joy brightened the tears which still stood in her eyes.

"Where did you get this?" enquired her mother.

"I shall tell you afterwards," whispered Nance. "I have disturbed you—try to sleep again;—the negus I hope will do you good—I have tea too for the morning continued the affection-

nate girl with the fond delight of a child—sleep, sleep dear mother.”

“Nance, yesterday we parted with our last shilling—how came these things here?”

“I shall tell you to-morrow—your eyes are heavy, sleep now.”

“Go to rest then, Nance—you will make yourself ill by watching—God bless you!—kiss me—yet again—and take a mother’s blessing.”

The girl hung over her—The warm tears fell upon the invalid’s sunken cheek, and the daughter threw her arm over the attenuated form and sobbed upon her bosom.

At length the mother slept, and Nance sat down and watched. The rain beat against the window, and the gusts of wind broke in long moans upon the silence. Nance thought of the future—it was a cheerless reflection—she thought of the past, and she wept again!

But with the future as the reader will soon be

made acquainted ; it is fitting he should now know something of the past.

Nance Campbell was the only child of a surgeon who had died some years before, and who having once served in the army, left his widow and young daughter not without a scanty means of subsistence from the limited pension allowed the former by the war office. Upon this they had hitherto lived. They were poor, without friends, but restricted as was their income they had struggled to support an appearance not wholly incommensurate with the rank their character and feelings assigned them. The widow had fallen sick, and the fees of her medical attendants had made sad inroad on their limited finances—their rent and other debts had been allowed to run into arrear. Mrs. Campbell was compelled to sell her little property to liquidate her debts, and to remove into an obscure lodging in a cheaper part of London. There the mother and the daughter

now resided ; the illness of the former had suffered no abatement, debts and embarrassments encreased ; the poor widow was on her death-bed, and with her would cease the scanty income which supported them both.

But the record of poverty is not all. There was an orphan boy, the son of an officer in Mr. Campbell's regiment, who had entered as a midshipman on board an Indiaman, and was now first mate in one of the vessels in the India service ; had known Nance from girlhood, loved her and was loved again. His was the love-gift—the miniature she had pledged to-night. Frank Duncan was on his voyage to India.

Nance shed bitter tears. She reproached herself for having parted with the love-pledge, although a mother's necessities might have hallowed the act. It did not do so to Nance ; yet, were it to be done again, she would not have acted otherwise than she did. Her mother was dying, their means of subsistence

was dependant on her life, and Nance, amid all her sorrows, could not hide from herself the dim picture of indigence, which threw a melancholy hue over her future fortunes.

Yes, the mother was dying. Nance saw her sinking day by day, and although the subtle disease, which was preying on its victim, cheated the sufferer with a hope of life, the daughter saw the signs of decaying nature even too plainly for affection to disguise.

And what would become of Nance? Their property was already expended; indigence had already set its iron fangs upon their little household—they had no friends—and he whom she loved—he the frank and gallant-hearted—the being who made life desirable to her—the object of her fondest hopes, truest, gentlest, and most confiding affection—poor Nance felt she had betrayed!

It was now when she sat thus alone in the room, that she remembered a stranger had

followed her when she was procuring the necessaries for her mother—she remembered he had even addressed her; and his undisguised look of admiration when she turned her mild features to his, in surprise at being accosted.—She remembered he had fallen back—she thought—nay, she was sure—he had followed her.

With the pure enthusiasm of her nature it at first seemed to her a juncture which at a time of impending calamity might be the means of warding it off, or breaking its fall. It might be some kind stranger whom providence in its unsearchable designs had thrown in her way, to lead her from the dire casualties of female indigence, to a virtuous and happy home—to become a protector and guardian to her, and to give her away at the altar to him whom her affection entwined with every mental vision. It was thus Nance's thoughts ran on, but amid them all, she felt a nameless chill of

heart which mocked the unchecked bearing of her thoughts. She remembered that the glance of the stranger's face, slight as it had been, was of a nature which would make her shrink from looking for solace or protection there: it was an idle train of unformed hopes, fears, and wishes, and she dismissed them from her mind; and Nance kissed her sleeping parent, threw herself upon her lowly bed to dream of Frank Duncan, and the lost miniature.

CHAPTER II.

“ Deprived of all,
Of every stay, save innocence and Heaven.”
THOMPSON’S SEASONS.

DAY by day Mrs. Campbell grew weaker—day by day increased the approaches of death. She became insensible to what was passing around her; the tender ministering, the affectionate assiduities of her daughter were no longer thanked with blessings and tears. Poor Nance, although her mother lived, was already alone in the world. The fond eye whose

heart-touching look had used to cheer and animate, nay even amid all their misery to gladden the affectionate girl, was now cold and vacant; the words which had used to flow in a mother's grateful accents from those trembling lips, were now feeble mutterings, or, when heard, but incoherent expressions. Nance was indeed alone—a loneliness of misery; she saw death drawing near her only parent, her only friend, protector and guardian in life—she saw cold poverty waiting in the back-ground—she saw more than this—the want of means even to purchase her mother a grave! There is perhaps little romance in such a reflection, but there is one of life's sternest truths in it. Whatever grief may demand, whatever oblivion the pangs of affliction may throw over the dark realities of life—there are situations where they will obtrude, to harrow the heart, to scoff as it were at its very agony.

It is strange, and when faithfully considered

a paradox to the miserable doctrine of the materialist; that the soul on the immediate approach of death—however prostrate it might have been before—becomes aroused to the most active intelligence, and in its finely tempered aspirations, seems to borrow as it were a radiance from approaching immortality. On the morning of the day on which she died, Mrs. Campbell once more looked with consciousness upon her pale child; once more clasped her to her bosom and mingled her tears with hers. It was a bitter, though a grateful interchange of feeling—the dying mother thought in sadness, tempered with a holy trust, on the dark future which seemed to open to her child; she spoke with a feeble voice, but in earnest tones, of the priceless value of virtue—of the sustaining hand of Him who neither slumbers nor sleeps; and melancholy as might be her future fate—full of trials as it was certain to be—the whole of

life's evils were triumphed over ; the horror of calamities, even in this world, were sanctified, and the noblest dowry which woman could possess, was that purity of heart and life, which, not like that which is the result of accident, rises in the dignity of innocence above all the temptations which misery may sigh for or affluence array !

But these fell idly upon Nance's ear ; her heart was full ; she was weeping over a dying mother ; the past—the future—life, fortune, love itself, were swamped in the agony of that dreadful hour ; and when her dimmed eyes could see more clearly they looked upon her mother's corpse !

It has often been asked, often wondered at, and never answered rightly, how the poor, the very poor, the needy, the penniless, get over difficulties which in themselves, without the aid of charity, appear insurmountable. Much, no doubt, is owing to the genuine sympathy,

the ready assistance of those who like the sufferers are also poor—to that sacred decency, that honest delicacy which distinguishes the acts of those who also have known misery—to others in distress;—to that knowledge where the wounded heart bleeds—the absence of formal condolence—the presence of genuine feeling—that temper of mind which more than all the bounties of the rich, brings healing on its wings—when the character, like gold tried in the fire, has been tempered anew by misery, and refined into humanity. And Nance, aided by her humble neighbours, who with a lively sympathy for her sufferings did not lose a certain respect for her superior rank and education, was enabled to defray the expences of her mother's funeral. To effect this (for the aid she had received was not pecuniary, but the direction of the world's experience and the assistance of kindly acts,) Nance had been obliged to part with nearly all that formed her

scanty property ; and on the evening of the day on which her mother's remains were carried to the grave, she sat alone in the silent dreary room, without knowing how on the morrow she was to earn her bread. She had but a few shillings in the world ; the tumult of grief into which her mind had hitherto been thrown was now partly subsided, and although with a heavy heart, she was able to think with calmness of the fearful jeopardy of her situation. What could she do ? She had not been brought up in affluence or luxury, but she was still a stranger to the struggles of life ; her girlhood had been spent in ease under the fond eye of an indulgent father ; and her early womanhood in attending, comforting and ministering to a sick mother. She had latterly known poverty, but until now had never known indigence ; her education had been liberal, her feelings, sentiments, the intelligent gentleness of her character fitted her for a

sphere in life which she seemed debarred from occupying, and in some degree unfitted her for the drudgery of mechanical labour. She thought of the situation of governess; but was checked in this hope by the difficulty of obtaining it, and a secret feeling of diffidence in herself to give instruction in the details of education, which her circumstances of late years had compelled her to neglect. She was an expert needlewoman; perhaps some of those humble friends whom chance had thrown in her way might procure her employment, which, if even temporary, would enable her to gain time to look for something better, and banish for awhile the terrors of indigence. It was thus that Nance resolved, but her mind did not rest upon the conclusion to which it had arrived. There was another banished thought recalled — another sorrow more acute than all the rest — a reproach — for although her reason justified the act,

feelings, which she could not analyze, reproached her for having surrendered the love-pledge ; she thought of one again whom she loved as fondly and devotedly as the sorrow-stricken heart alone can love ; she remembered him the boy whom her father admired, the youth whom her mother had always met with a greeting smile ; and the man whom all who knew respected and honoured. But in boyhood, youth, and manhood, he had ever been dear to Nance ; years had only increased their mutual attachment ; generous and confiding she had long owned her love, and Frank only waited until he had earned what would provide her a comfortable home, to lead her to the altar and make her his wife. These reflections beguiled away half the night, and Nance in the morning received an early visit from the kindest of all her neighbours, the widow of a Custom-house officer who occupied the first floor. Mrs. Ormonde was an Irishwoman, and although her

brow was wrinkled and her hair was gray, her black eyes were as bright and dancing, and her heart as warm and kind as ever they had been. She took an earnest and sincere interest in the poor orphan girl—and but for Nance's shrinking pride would have conferred acts of bounty which the means of the one were as ill calculated to afford, as the delicacy of the other would not have allowed her to receive.

“Ah now sure and its stirring you are,” exclaimed Mrs. Ormonde entering the room, “but its a cold morning, this, Miss Campbell, you have no fire here either, and its dull and drizzly in the street. They would not be Christians that would leave ye here, sitting and mourning, thinking and thinking, and crying your eyes out. Come down stairs and breakfast with me—I have a nice bright fire, waiting for you, and tea fit for the Emperor of China himself—I have sent out for fresh baked bread, and eggs, and a morsel of ham, and—”

"Nay, nay," said Nance, "you have done wrong to put yourself to that trouble—I will soon kindle a fire here, and —"

"Now my dear let me hear no scruples to do what I bid ye—It will be long ere I ask ye to do what is wrong. You have no one now to give you a bit of advice, and there is nobody more disposed to give you it than myself."

"And that is what I had made up my mind to ask you," said Nance.

"But come down with me, for the air of this place is cold, come now—we can speak about all that after breakfast—a cup of warm tea will cheer you. You are pale, poor child!—They must have hearts of flint that could leave you here."

Nance descended with Mrs. Ormonde and found a cheerful hearth and a comfortable breakfast awaiting her. The tears rose to the eyes of the grateful girl at the attentive kindness of the old Irishwoman, who on her part

was nearly as much touched, at the effect her hospitality had produced.

After breakfast Mrs. Ormonde enquired if Nance had thought of any means of employment ?

“ I have thought of the situation of Governess,” said the other, “ but I fear that will not be easy to obtain.”

“ Governess !” repeated Mrs. Ormonde, “ and without friends, and living here ! And more than all that without dress, without the means of appearing like a lady, as you are—They would turn you from the door, my child—the lady’s maid would sneer at you—the saucy footman insult you. Governess ! you would break your heart first.”

“ I said,” resumed Nance, “ that I feared it would be difficult to obtain it, but I would wish it nevertheless—I thought I might be more comfortable in such a place than working with my needle—but perhaps I was wrong.”

"No, no, Miss Campbell—you were right—and we will try, although there is but a poor hope of getting such a place—but in the mean time what do you think of doing—you spoke of your needle."

"I can do any kind of needle work—but I should not like to go into a milliner's shop. Could anything be got for me to do here in my own room—I would toil, oh! I would toil, were the earnings ever so little!"

"Ah, now! and you've just spoken what I was wishing you to speak, for I was afraid to mention it first, lest I might offend ye—but—its a poor trade, but an honest one—I can get you employment here at the shoe binding."

"Shoe binding," repeated poor Nance in a tone of dejection. "Yet," continued she with earnestness, "I am grateful to you for offering it me. I will work at it hard, very hard—I can come down here and sit by you too when

I work, if you will allow me—I am grateful to you, indeed I am.”

“Now, God’s blessing on you for those same words,” replied the other. “Oh and its glad I’ll be to have you here—you will get but poor wages, but then you must put up with that, and hope for something better.”

“I will, I will,” replied Nance. “I will never repine or grumble, and if you knew—if you only knew,” continued she with the tears starting to her eyes, “how grateful I am to you.”

“Do not say more about that,” said the widow.

“I’ll just put on my shawl and bonnet and see the person who I know will give you employment. Its hard terms they make, but its hard terms that are made with them—little do the fine ladies think when they draw a shoe upon their foot of the salt tears that may have sprinkled it. But wait you here, and I’ll

bring you work for the day, and show you too how it is done—you must spend this day with me.”

Mrs. Ormonde kept her word—and Nance obtained the employment which had been promised her. It was a miserable one. The wages were low, the work sometimes delayed, and although Nance strove hard—although she worked day and night in the hope of being able to save enough to redeem the miniature—no industry—no privation could effect it—she earned barely enough to live on.

A few days after her mother's funeral a gentleman visited the house. He was the landlord, and Nance recognised in him the stranger who had followed her in the street. A quarter's rent was nearly due—the Irish-woman told Nance's case to him—he listened to it patiently and begged the young woman not to distress herself about the rent—as she would not find him a hard creditor. The

heart of the poor girl bounded with joy, for it seemed as if she should now have it in her power to regain the miniature.

She continued her dull irksome labour. To her it had lost its own character, and she regarded it but as the means of getting Frank's love-gift back again ; it was only when her aching fingers and the prostration of wearied nature compelled her to pause, that she laid aside her task.

The landlord frequently visited her. He was a man of about thirty, the idle son of a penurious father who dying had left him considerable wealth.

The other inmates of the house spoke cautiously of him ; he had large property in the neighbourhood ; his tenants for the most part were poor, often in arrear with their rent, and the iron hand which the law gives to a landlord and the terror which the thought of being turned out of doors gives to poverty, sealed the

lips of many who otherwise would have spoken in no flattering strain of old John Walter's son.

It has been truly remarked that no fools are so tiresome as those who have some wit, and with the same truth may be observed that no vicious character is so dangerous as that which has a sprinkling of virtue in it. Jack Walters, or *young* Jack Walters as he was called in the neighbourhood, was a person of a strong, but depraved and ill-cultivated mind ; he had been brought up with great harshness and in a contracted, even stunted manner by his father ; and when at the age of two and twenty he succeeded to an ample heritage, he suffered his passions to run wild—and pursued his schemes of pleasure with a recklessness which disguised in a great measure the sordid craftiness of his character. Nor was he devoid of seeming generosity either. His name was never withheld from any cause of charity in which it might be sought—his purse was freely opened on most occasions ; he

was hospitable, convivial, easy to his tenants, and few acts of sordid harshness were laid to his charge. Yet, with all this, Walters was not a generous man. Wealth had come upon him too fully and suddenly to foster any great attachment to amass or to save;—the command of thousands had produced a disregard for smaller sums—he had obtained possession of far greater riches than for awhile his ideas even of extravagance came up to the income of;—hence he was easy, open-handed and sometimes lavish from the same cause, the direction of his thoughts and passions towards other objects, than the amassing of wealth. His nature nevertheless was essentially sordid, and when the active feelings of youth had subsided Jack Walters bade fair to be as great a miser, as hard a landlord, and as griping and purse-proud a man as his father was. He now gave carelessly what he valued lightly—it was no sacrifice, were it so it would not have been

given—for Walters was incapable of making one.

He pursued a course of systematic profligacy—sullied—if such a course of life is capable of being sullied—by affected libertinism, vulgar habits, and a braggart's tongue. He had met Nance Campbell in the street—he had been struck with her beauty, and his selfish heart exulted at finding she was one of his own needy tenants, and that a combination of circumstances seemed to have thrown her in his power. He visited the house often—sometimes saw and sat with Nance—while his apparently frank, generous character made him a favourite with the old Irishwoman, who was slow to believe ill of any one, and far less of one to whom she had more than once been obliged for ready forbearance in times of difficulty. One evening Nance returned home in an unusual exhilaration of spirits. She had for some days been scantily supplied with work, but now she

had procured some that required to be done with great neatness, and for which something higher than the usual rate of wages would be allowed. It was the uppers of a few pair of richly embroidered silk slippers that had to be finished with great expedition, and it was with difficulty that Nance obtained such a number, it being almost impossible that she could execute the work within the time prescribed. The wages she would receive was all that she required to add to her little store to make up the sum needed to redeem the miniature; and her heart told her that it would not faint at any exertion in such a cause. "I will work night and day," thought Nance, "I shall not shut my eyes until I have finished them, and then, oh-then! dear, dear Frank your miniature will be mine again."

And for two days and two nights Nance toiled at the heavy task she had undertaken. Her back ached, her fevered temples throbbed

again, but still she worked. The sun set, night came on, and she sat working there; the gray dawn returned, the sounds of busy day awoke again, and Nance was working still. At length the task was finished. The whole order was neatly, industriously, faithfully done. She put her hand to her brow; she felt weak and wearied, yet when she saw that the work was completed, and thought on that night, that very night, she should place the miniature in her bosom again, her heart throbbed with joy long unknown.

She gathered and folded up what had employed her busy fingers for two days and two long winter nights, and putting on her cloak and bonnet, hastened to proceed to the Shoemakers. She was ill, weary and toil worn; it was dark and wet, yet Nance's step was light for her humble heart was happy. The shop towards which she was hurrying was nearly a mile distant; the small drizzly rain wetted her face, the streets were dirty, noisy and

crowded, but Nance went on heedless of all. She passed the Pawnbroker's window—"he is still open," thought she, "I shall be in time to redeem it to-night."

She reached the Shoe-maker's house. He came forward from the workshop where he had been quarrelling with some of his men. He looked sulky and illnatureed. It dispelled the pleased smile which had risen to poor Nance's pale features. She put her hand under her cloak, gave a start, became flurried, her trembling hands searched for the little parcel—she burst into tears—for she discovered she had lost it by the way!

CHAPTER III.

"How many drink the cup of baleful grief,
Or eat the bitter bread of misery."

THOMPSON.

THE Shoe-maker regarded the weeping girl with a look of suspicion. "It is well acted," said he, "but it won't do. I thought when you took away such a quantity of valuable work it was for no honest purpose. No pair of hands could have finished the job since then. Come, where are they? I will not be trifled with."

"Oh," sobbed Nance, "I worked hard to finish them—I have dropped them coming here."

"Don't tell me that. You have dropped them at some pawnbroker's. Where are they? I ask you again—speak—it will not be whimpering that will serve you, I can tell you—I've been too long in London to be gammoned, mind that—speak out or I'll send for a policeman."

"Perhaps," said Nance, "they may yet be found, I'll go back every step of the way."

"Well now, that's a good'un. No, no, my fine lady, you must just stop where you are. Hand over the duplicate."

"I have not pawned them," cried Nance, "you cannot think I would have done that."

"May be not—and its unpolite of me to say so to such a genteel young woman as you— isn't it now? But I can't afford to lose two

pounds—they were worth that, if they were worth a shilling. Disappointing my customers too. But I must have them come what may.”

“Two pounds!” repeated Nance, clasping her hands.

“Ay; but may be you didn’t get more than one for them, like enough. Come I can’t lose time and money too—where are they?”

“I cannot tell—indeed I cannot,” exclaimed Nance. “I’ll pay their value—I’ll give you all the money I have, and work for you until you are paid.”

“Work! well now, ye must think me a soft one—I’m going to trust you with more work am I? Jim, go out and see if you can fall in with a policeman.”

“Oh, do not! do not do that,” cried Nance, “I will pay you for what I have lost—I will give up all I possess.”

“And how much may that be? eh. No, no, I’m not to be humbugged this way—you

must get me two pounds, or march off to the station-house."

"I will borrow it from some one," said Nance. But the words fell back coldly upon herself. From whom could she borrow? She knew Mrs. Ormonde, kind and generous as she was could not afford, perhaps could not command such a sum. She knew not what to do. Her hard task-master regarded her with sullen impatience, and once more threatened to give her in charge to the police. Suddenly the landlord Walters flashed upon her recollection. She remembered his seeming kindness, and his professions of friendship; but Nance, although she scarce trusted to ask herself why, felt a nameless reluctance, even an antipathy, to make such a request of him. But it was no time to balance objections, the Shoe-maker, evidently out of temper at the idea of having been duped, was again proceeding to give orders to call in a policeman, when the startled

girl in an agony of agitation and terror, mentioned Mr. Walter's name. It had a talismanic effect.

"Whew!" exclaimed the Shoe-maker, "and you are one of Jack Walter's friends, are ye? Ha! ha! ha! Ah, yes, Jack will pay it no doubt. Jim run over to Mr. Walters, and, if he is at home, tell him that Miss Campbell, ha, ha, ha! is here, and wishes to see him directly—quick now—Ay, and the truth is out at last, ha, ha, ha! Mrs. Ormonde told me such a long story about you too—Well now, if this isn't as good as a play—all out at last," and the Shoe-maker, who was a fat man, laughed until his little piggish eyes filled with water.

Nance did not understand his allusions and was too much agitated and distressed to attend to his mirth, and it was only when Walters entered the shop accompanied by the workman who had gone to fetch him, that the blush which rose to her own cheek revealed to her

the real nature of her previous scruples, and the point of the Shoe-maker's jest. With some hesitation she informed Walters of her loss, as well as the construction put upon it, which she pleaded as the excuse for having solicited his interference. But she had need of few words, Walters was evidently well pleased to have been called upon on such an occasion, and with surly independance demanded of the Shoe-maker the value of his loss.

By this time several persons had come into the shop, and the man, nettled at the tone in which Walters had thought fit to address him, answered the question in a way that let the bystanders see he entertained by no means a high opinion of the platonic friendship evinced by the querist. The sum demanded however, was instantly paid, and Walters led Nance from the shop. But tongues were busy after she was gone—poor Nance's character was slandered.

She walked on with her protector. He addressed her, but Nance heard him not. Her mind was dizzy, her body was wearied and exhausted by toil and want of rest, she was sick at heart, wretched and ill. She passed the Pawnbroker's again—the tears rose afresh to her eyes—but she concealed them, and now for the first time was able to thank her companion with fervent gratitude for the good office he had done her. He accompanied her to her door—he saw she was agitated and distressed, and left her with a promise to call upon her on the following day.

And Walters kept his word. After an unhappy night, Nance in the morning went down to Mrs. Ormonde and told her all that had occurred. The honest Irishwoman's indignation at the imputation which had been cast upon her, was only exceeded by her praise and admiration of Walters' kindness. Nay, a new idea arose in her mind. She imagined

their young landlord had fallen in love with her protégée, and saw wedlock, and golden visions in store for Nance. She kept her opinion secret, but resolved as far as in her lay, to forward the rich lover's suit.

"Cheer you, Miss Campbell," said she, "do not take what has occurred to heart, you will soon have no need to labour for a livelihood—cheer up, my girl, all will be well again, and better than it has ever been."

"How can that be," said Nance, "my rent is far in arrear, I shall never be able to pay what I owe—I have now no means of earning a shilling. What is to become of me?" Mrs. Ormonde smiled, and again told her to be of good cheer. Forthwith she spoke in high terms of Walters—of his munificence of character—his kindness to herself—his forbearance to the poorer class of his tenants—his charity—and hospitality, and even extended her praises to his advantages of person. Nance willingly

assented to all this panegyric—even the last particular, she did not see fit to dissent from, although in spite of her sorrows she could hardly forbear smiling at the unmerited tribute which the Irishwoman paid to one, who, whatever might be his mental beauties, had certainly little to boast of in the way of personal attractions.

But the entrance of the gentleman himself soon put an end to their discourse, and Mrs. Ormonde, with what she esteemed proper tact, left Nance and the visitor to themselves.

Walters in spite of himself, in spite of the good act which he had done, and in spite, also, of the absence of any compunction of feeling regarding his designs, or refinement of thought regarding the object of them, felt abashed in the presence of the poor girl, whom he had relieved. There was a gentle grace in Nance's manner, which notwithstanding all the disadvantages of fortune, stamped even in the most

ordinary intercourse a certain rank which the vulgar minded never fail to feel, while they cannot avoid secretly acknowledging a distinction of superiority—Walters felt this in the present instance, and it was increased by the silent rebuke which his purposes received from the unsuspecting aspect of misery and purity.

But Walters did speak, and as he believed, prepared Nance for his designs without a mask. He spoke of the confinement which her industry occasioned, of the injury it would do her health, of his desire to see her in better circumstances, and at last acknowledged that he felt a greater interest in her welfare than the cold name of friendship was intended to convey. He confessed that he loved her, painted, in what he imagined were alluring terms, the advantages he had the power of procuring for her, and without naming the word 'mistress,' avoided mentioning that of 'wife.'

But the film had now fallen from Nance's

eyes, and she saw the lurking baseness of his designs—she had indeed once imagined that his frequent visits were occasioned by something more than mere sympathy with her sufferings, but never 'till now had she dreamed that she was the intended victim of dishonour. An avowal of honest love would have been rejected with pain, but a proposal that hinted at disgrace, was repelled, was spurned with scorn.

Meek and gentle as she was, Nance had strong feelings and a high-toned mind. The outrage to both that the sudden light which now broke in upon her occasioned, seemed to change her very character.

She answered calmly, and in her manner betrayed no anger, but her words were cold and measured, and her blue eyes usually so soft now burned again. She saw the drift of the language used to her, and without acknowledging—answered it.

Walters saw this, he saw that the bruised

spirit though crushed was not conquered, that the humble girl amid all sufferings preserved her pride and the native dignity of a pure heart—it increased her beauty too, for her fine intelligent features were now animated, and a faint flush had risen to her pale cheek. But this only enhanced her in his eyes, without calling forth any generous sentiment that claimed kindred with the character, which in spite of himself he was forced to admire, it only strengthened his purpose, for now he saw a new conquest in triumphing over one in whose presence he had been abashed. But he believed that poverty had not yet sufficiently humbled her ; he imagined that she only required to be placed in greater difficulties to abandon the spirit which she had so suddenly called up. And he knew that these were crowding upon her, and exulted at the thought—for with the feelings of a dastard his purpose now in some degree partook of the character of revenge.

Their interview finished in mere words; nothing had been expressed to call for an apology on one side, or offence upon the other; but their constructive import had not been misunderstood, nor had both parties failed to see the character in which they must afterwards appear to each other.

Mrs. Ormonde entered soon after he was gone, and found Nance in tears. Mistaking their cause she rallied her upon them, and, unconscious of the pain she was giving, entered anew upon the praises of Walters, with various episodes respecting his wealth, and the happiness of the woman whom he might make his wife. She went even farther than that. Presuming that he had declared a passion for Nance, she advised her to listen to it; remarked upon his unusual predilection for visiting that portion of his property, and declared that she had long ago seen with secret satisfaction that this young Cræsus had been smitten,

and commended herself for the judicious manner in which from time to time she had added fuel to the flame by well timed allusion to the qualities of heart and character of her, who had been so fortunate as to bask in the sun of his regard.

Nance said nothing, for her course was already taken. She retired to her own room, sat up most of the night repairing her scanty wardrobe, and departed on the morrow, leaving the remainder of her little property to pay the rent and the money she owed. She wrote a letter to Mrs. Ormonde, the heavy tears fell often upon it ere it was finished, and not daring to trust herself with a parting, left the letter for her, and ere any of the other inmates were stirring, Nance, with her little bundle under her arm, was wandering she knew not whither.

It was a bleak wintry morning—she was helpless and forlorn, yet she breathed more

freely and her step was lighter at having quitted a place where she might have again to listen to advances which did her dishonour even to hear. She thought of her dead mother—of the happy days of her youth—of play-mates of her infancy now living in splendour—of her hopes in those sunny days, of her girlhood's wish to be twenty, and the oft repeated belief "I shall be happy then!" She thought too of Frank Duncan and of the miniature—of her late prospect of regaining it; and poor Nance, with a full heart, could not help exclaiming "my lot is a bitter one!"

The morning was pretty far advanced when after walking several miles towards the west part of London, her eye was suddenly arrested by seeing a card in the window of a small bookseller's shop—"A young lady wanted to assist in a school,"—she paused, read it again, and, with but a feeble hope of being employed,

entered the shop to inquire regarding the situation.

A grim, morose looking woman, dressed in a black cap, came forward from a back parlour, and without taking the trouble to answer Nance's inquiries gave her a card, with "Miss Prim's Seminary for young ladies, 29, * * * * Street," engraven upon it, where she was informed she would learn 'every particular'. Nance thanked her and left the shop.

After walking about half a mile she entered * * * * street, and reached the door of No, 29. With a trembling hand she struck the knocker, and on requesting to see Miss Prim, and giving her name, was suspiciously allowed to enter the passage.

In a minute or two the servant who had admitted her came back to lead her into the august presence of the Principal of the seminary for young ladies. Nance laid down her bundle and followed her.

Miss Prim was seated in a cushioned chair, before her lay a huge atlas, on her right hand stood a celestial and on her left a terrestrial globe. She was tall and thin, dressed in a morning gown, and a cap that stood out on all sides like "quills upon the fretted porcupine."

"Miss Campbell," said Miss Prim.

Nance bowed modestly.

"What branches of education do you profess to impart?"

"I know French and a little Italian, and I understand the piano."

"And the harp?" enquired Miss Prim.

"No," said Nance, "I cannot play the harp."

"That is unfortunate," said Miss Prim. "Do you understand the mathematics?"

An answer in the negative was given.

"That is unfortunate," said the female Solon, "I presume you are able to attend to a Greek

class—should I be so fortunate as to have one.”

“ I am sorry I do not understand Greek,” said Nance.

“ That is really very unfortunate,” rejoined Miss Prim, “ very unfortunate. Have you any predilection for the sciences ?”

“ Ma’am ?”

“ The sciences ; such as chymistry, aerostation and the galvanic battery ; for gymnastics and the sceptre exercise I employ a master.”

“ I only know them by name,” said Nance, “ but I should be happy to make myself as useful as I could.”

“ Have you been much accustomed to imparting instruction ?”

“ This would be my first essay,” said Nance.

Miss Prim called this unfortunate too ; but her looks showed that she was pleased.

“ Have you any reference ?”

“ None, I fear,” said Nance, “ that would

“speak as to my abilities to teach. My father and mother are dead, and I have no friends.”

Miss Prim looked hard at her, but the result of her scrutiny appeared satisfactory. She then made Nance give a minute detail of her birth, parentage and education.

“My last junior assistant gave me the highest references,” observed Miss Prim, “one of them to a person of title; and I gave her twenty pounds a year, but as you have not such to offer me, I am afraid I cannot allow you any remuneration beyond board and lodging, and the use of my library, even should you be the object of my choice.”

Nance did not quite see the force of the distinction, but she said she would be happy to engage on any terms.

“I shall be willing then to give you a month’s trial,” said the considerate lady, “and at the end of that period should I approve of you, I will take you on my regular establishment. No re-

muneration however can be given for the first two years; after that, if you conduct yourself to my satisfaction, perhaps I may allow you a salary of five pounds per annum."

Nance thanked her, and inquired when Miss Prim desired she would commence? The latter replied, immediately; and Nance informing her, with some hesitation, that all the property she had in the world was a small bundle which lay in the passage below, said she would be happy either to remain or to call again in the evening.

The Principal manifested no surprise at this declaration of poverty and needy circumstances; in fact she had guessed as much, and pulling the bell desired the servant who entered to shew Nance to a bed-room in one of the attics, where in half an hour she would send Miss Starch, the senior assistant, to give her a general idea of the duties she would have to perform. So saying, Miss Prim opened the

huge atlas in token of putting an end to the conversation.

Nance procured her bundle and carried it up to a cold, bare looking attic room, and here having taken off her cloak and bonnet waited the arrival of Miss Starch.

Poorly as Nance was dressed her appearance was ladylike. The soft brown hair parted on her white forehead, the blue eyes, and her touching sweetness of countenance, united into an expression eminently prepossessing, while her faded dress possessed a degree of neatness which more than atoned for its humbleness.

Miss Starch, pursuant to Miss Prim's decree, made her appearance. She was a spare, tall, middle-aged woman, with long, bony hands, withered features, and wore her hair like a girl, hanging over her shrivelled neck. She seemed a person who had undergone various hard campaigns in the way of privation, and her looks were severe and acrimonious.

With the precision of a clerk of arraigns she informed Nance of the duties she would have to perform; that Miss Prim's seminary being a Day school she would have no pupils to attend to in play hours, but in lieu of that would have to set copies, examine their ciphering books, mend the pens for next day, copy music, and, in short, have a whole catalogue of drudgery to perform in the evening; while during school hours, she would be required to make herself generally useful, and that Miss Prim expected that after dinner Miss Campbell would be ready to come down stairs and attend the afternoon classes. Nance, who had not yet breakfasted, enquired what was the dinner hour, and was informed that the junior teacher's was always served up (like her other meals) in her own room at one o'clock, but that she (Miss Starch) and Miss Prim dined at three. So saying, this antiquated piece of juvenility left the room.

The change of situation had been so sudden, that Nance felt confused, and while she looked around her on the bare walls of her narrow dormitory, half doubted if it were real. But one o'clock was fast approaching, and a portion of bread soaked in a kind of poor soup was formally served up to her for dinner. She partook of it, and having done so was again waited upon by Miss Starch to be introduced to her new duties.

The door of the school-room, now filled with girls, was solemnly opened, and Miss Starch led the way into the place, Nance following her, and as she looked around remembering, not without a pang, her own happy school days, and how little her light heart then dreamed of the troubles which were in store for her.

Miss Prim, who was seated at the upper end of the room, now rose, and made a speech, the little girls looking on in mute astonishment,

and Miss Starch pursing out her lips by way of cordial acquiescence in all that was said. After this Nance was requested to hear a junior French class, Miss Starch sat down to the piano, and Miss Prim commenced a lecture on Captain Ross' discoveries in the Arctic Region.

The afternoon passed laboriously away, and in the evening, as Miss Starch had truly said, Nance had a load of drudgery upon her hands. Two cups of weak tea and bread, with a small portion of butter scraped upon it, at six o'clock served the double purpose of tea and supper—and Nance returned again to the cold empty school-room to the performance of her task. Here she remained until a late hour, and then gladly welcomed her humble pallet, wearied and worn out in mind and body.

And such continued the routine of her labour. The month passed away, Miss Prim was satisfied with her new teacher, and Nance became

wedded to a life of drudgery. She had made a visit to Mrs. Ormonde, and communicated her new address, and had some difficulty in vindicating herself from the warm-hearted Irishwoman's reproaches. Nance bore all her bitter words, and to shew that she took them not in ill part, soon visited her again. The kind woman clasped her to her bosom, and wept over her as if she had been an only child returned to her mother. But Nance was now grieved to hear that a rumour was current in the neighbourhood that she was living as the mistress of her former landlord, and Walters himself was even said to sanction the report.

Nance was ashamed at the effect which this intelligence had upon her. It vexed, mortified, and depressed her spirits more than all her previous trials put together.

On her next visit Mrs. Ormonde had pleasanter tidings. It was a letter from Frank Duncan, which stated his vessel had suffered

damage in India, and had to be repaired ; but in a few months he hoped to arrive in England. Nance wept with joy over the letter, it atoned for all her troubles, and seemed to throw a bright ray over her future lot. Frank would be back again, he would find her poor and humble, but her heart the same fond heart it had ever been. And would his be changed ? No, Nance judged by her own, and never dreamt of that.

But the miniature was still unredeemed, and the twelvemonth allowed for redemption was fast expiring. A kind French girl, who taught drawing at the school, had given Nance some instruction, and she had laboured to improve herself in the hope of being able with the price of her drawings to redeem the miniature. An almost hopeless task, but what task to love seems hopeless ? She sat up at night and laboured with her pencil, and at length was able, through her kind instructress, to realise a trifle by the sale of what she had done. But

money so earned came slowly, the twelvemonth expired, and the miniature was exposed for sale in the Pawnbroker's window.

When poor Nance first became aware of this, it was in passing on one of her visits to her Irish friend; from that moment she was nearly distracted, she would frequently ask permission to go out and wander to the shop, in the dread that it might have been disposed of; she would stand and look upon it, then with a bursting heart and wearied step return to her cheerless home. She had not yet more than half the sum required to redeem it; and what price might now be set upon its purchase she knew not; yet she laboured more diligently than ever, but her earnings were small and tardy. The miniature still hung in the window, and every visit she paid seemed to her the last in which she might look on it again.

At length she amassed the little sum for

which it had been pledged, and seized the first opportunity of going to the shop, hoping that having been the possessor she might be enabled to make easy terms for its re-purchase. She looked anxiously towards the window as she approached; her heart beat audibly, a cold thrill ran through her veins, for one glance showed her the miniature was no longer there. She rushed into the shop; inquired eagerly for it, but was carelessly answered by the Pawnbroker's boy "it had been disposed of that morning."

Heedless of all around her, Nance Campbell leaned on the counter and wept!

CHAPTER IV.

“ Believe not what the landmen say,
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind ;
And tell thee sailors, when away,
In ev’ry port a mistress find.”

GAY.

It was a clear frosty day. The air in spite of the City smoke seemed fresh and pure ; the wide streets that lead towards Limehouse were dry and clean looking, the sun shone bright and cheering, every thing looked gay and animated, and there was an air of contented cheerfulness on the faces of all who passed along.

A small party of young men were proceeding up the street, they were dressed like sailors, but the fine blue cloth of which their clothes were made, their clear linen, bronzed faces, and gentlemanly although seamenlike appearance showed they were the officers of some Indiaman from the adjoining docks.

"Stop Jack," said one, "I will buy some trinket here for my landlady's daughter. She asked me, when I went there this morning, what I had brought her from India. Let us see, what shall it be? This Pawnbroker's window seems to have a pretty good collection."

"Why, Frank," said a second, addressing another of the party, "what shall we advise him to buy. Ha! a miniature. Nay, faith, you must buy that, for as I live the likeness might do for yourself."

"Where is it?"

"There. By Heaven! I never saw any

thing so odd. Eh, what's the matter? you turn pale!"

"Pale! no, no, it was—ha! ha! ha! do I look pale?"

"Ay, faith you do. But come, Tom shall buy the miniature."

"No!" cried the other in a voice that made the party start. "I will buy it, since—since the likeness is so striking. Ha! ha! ha! We shall go afterwards and drink, and shout, and rave like fools, fools, as we are. Aye, we are all made light of when away, depend upon that; but we can make light of others too; ha! ha! ha! Come, let us buy something—I choose the miniature."

His companions followed him into the shop, each purchased something, and Frank Duncan, for it was himself, secured the miniature. "And now," said Frank as soon as they had left the place, "Tom Leslie and I have no kind friends to meet; no fathers, mothers,

sisters, brothers or maiden aunts to report ourselves to. We had better part company here, and arrange to meet some early day. To-night I am going to play the fool ; Tom Leslie will join me, and such of you as may—who stays and who goes ?”

The sailors looked surprised at the sudden excitement of their companion ; Leslie and another agreed to keep company with him, and the rest made an appointment for the morrow, declaring that their friends expected them. They parted here—Frank and his two companions turned into a tavern in the neighbourhood, the rest hired cabs and proceeded to various parts of the town.

Frank ordered dinner. While it was being prepared he became gloomy and reserved, which was the more striking after his late high flow of spirits. His two companions strove to rally him, but he answered them with impatience approaching to asperity, and they forbore saying

more, wondering what could have occasioned a change so sudden and uncalled for.

They dined and drank freely. It was a wintry day and soon got dark—people began to drop into the parlour, as the public room of such taverns is designated, Frank and his companions resolved before going to any place of amusement to smoke their cigars there, and vary the scene;—(for latterly their society had been limited enough,) by observing such chance guests as the room might afford.

They removed to it. It was large and neatly furnished. A gas lamp was burning from the ceiling, newspapers lay scattered upon the square mahogany tables, about which one or two persons were already assembled.

The three sailors seated themselves at an unoccupied table, and seemed to find sufficient amusement in smoking their cigars, sipping grog and passing an occasional covert remark among themselves.

Jack Walters was one of those assembled in the room. He was a person of much consideration here for his property being in the neighbourhood he was known to be wealthy, and that is enough to make a man respected in a public assembly. But Walters more than that was known to be open handed and good-tempered, no wonder then that he should be able to draw around him a bacchanalian levee in such a place.

He was now smoking with great dignity in the chair of state. Whenever he uttered an expression which was intended to be witty, one or two of those around him set up a ready laugh, which was instantly responded to by the rest, the more remote from the "rich man" taking out their pipes and nodding their heads to shew that they appreciated the thing, although they were too late to give it more boisterous approbation. "Ah," said a facetious red nosed man in a black frock coat, who also seemed to be a person of consequence, for he

spoke with considerable authority, and laughed very loud at his own jests, "where has our friend here snugged away that pretty girl, Nance, Nance what d'ye call her—that used to live in the neighbourhood, eh?"

"Come, come Mr. Cherrybrow that ain't fair," said several voices together.

"What was the wench's name," enquired Mr. Cherrybrow, raising his tumbler, "for hang me if I know."

"Campbell," said Walters taking the pipe from his mouth to allow him to pronounce the word.

The blood rushed to Frank Duncan's face and brow, until his ears tingled again, and he almost gasped for breath as he drank in the words he heard.

"She was a pretty girl enough, this Nance Campbell," said a stout grocer who sat at a remote corner of the table. "I remember her coming to my shop last winter."

“ Ay, ay, let Jack Walters alone for finding out a pretty girl,” said several of the company.

“ Pretty,” repeated Mr. Cherrybrow replenishing his pipe. “ There are few go astray without a good face to recommend them—but to my mind now, that same Nance Campbell was one of the most accomplished—no offence to friend Walters—I say with her modest face and genteel appearance, one of the most—

“ Stop !” cried a voice from a distant table in a tone that made all present start, and Frank Duncan approached them. “ I am a friend,” said the sailor in a voice husky with emotion, “ of the young woman of whom you speak, and if you mention her name but once again,” continued he in a louder tone, “ I will construe it into a personal insult, the keenest one you could offer me.”

The blood rose in a purple cloud to Mr.

Cherrybrow's face, and his lips trembled with rage at being thus bearded in the midst of his boon companions in a public-room.

"Speak," repeated he, "I will speak just what I please, and where I please, and if you feel displeasure at what you hear, you may take yourself out of the sound of it. I repeat," continued Mr. Cherrybrow with angry energy, "and I don't care a pinch of snuff who is her friend, that Nance Campbell is a—"

But before the word could be uttered, a blow like the kick of a horse, on Mr. Cherrybrow's mouth, knocked out three of his teeth and made him fall prostrate on the sanded floor. They *were* certainly Mr. Cherrybrow's teeth, for he had bought and paid for them, but fortunately for him, his jaws denied any participation in the matter, and when the gentleman rose and wiped his bleeding mouth, he took the three teeth and quietly put them into his waistcoat pocket. Walters and the rest of the

guests had looked on in silent surprise. Frank still stood, his eyes flashing with passion, and Mr. Cherrybrow was busily engaged in examining the state of his mouth at a large mirror over the fire-place. Walters was the first to speak. "If you are a friend of Miss Campbell's," said he, "I can assure you that my worthy friend, who is a churchwarden of this parish, knows nothing whatever regarding her, beyond the idle gossip of the neighbourhood; and if you, and your two friends will join our party, I shall be happy to treat you all round with a tumbler of brandy and water, in token of reconciliation and good will."

This generous offer was declined, and seeing that Mr. Cherrybrow had quietly seated himself again without manifesting any disposition to renew the conversation, Frank rang the bell, called for his bill and left the place, accompanied by his friends.

Next day he took lodgings near Limehouse.

His ship was in the neighbouring docks—he had now obtained the wished for sum which would enable him to make Nance his wife—nay, more than that, he was about being promoted to the command of one of those princely vessels, but all his hopes, his prospects, his dearest wishes now were wrecked. His Nance, the lovely, kind, good Nance, who often in the midnight watch, had risen in his mind like the blessing of a holy thought—the being who was to animate his industry and cheer his coming home—the prize for which he had been toiling—the dear goal towards which he had been hastening, was removed, destroyed, just as it had been reached. He believed that Nance, the pure hearted, gentle girl was living a life of shame, and in the wantonness of infamy, had parted with his love-pledge.

And Nance heard that Frank was returned, and hurried to Mrs. Ormonde to enquire, what news, what message, what kind words he had

left for her. But Frank had not been there, and Mrs. Ormonde had no more tidings of him.

Next day she came again, heedless of the cruel upbraiding which her repeated absences occasioned her from her hard task-mistress ; but still Frank came not, though Mrs. Ormonde had discovered that he had taken lodgings in the neighbourhood.

With a trembling hand Nance wrote to him. It was a short hurried note, and blotted with her tears. She received no answer ;—day after day she came to Mrs. Ormonde—but still there was no letter, no message, no enquiry for her.

Her cup of misery was now full. Health and spirits sank under the load of anguish ; her weary labour in the school suffered no diminution, and owing to her distress of mind and enfeebled body she had often to endure reproach. Her condition was wretched beyond description—hope itself was gone now, her sufferings had lost their stay.

Meanwhile Walters, repentant of his own, and struck with Nance's conduct, but ignorant of her attachment to Frank Duncan, determined to offer her his hand. He mentioned this to Mrs. Ormonde, and requested her to assist him in obtaining her consent. The kind Irishwoman, overjoyed, willingly undertook the task, and when Nance called next upon her, she communicated Walter's proposal, and urged her to accept him for a husband. Nance wept bitterly ;—her health was sinking rapidly under the daily labour of mind and body which she had to sustain, the harsh treatment she received sunk into her soul, she even dreaded being turned into the streets without a home. Yet Frank, her own Frank, the object of her fondest, dearest love, could she surrender all hope of gaining him again ? Nance could only weep.

But Mrs. Ormonde pressed the suit, spoke in reproachful terms of the Sailor's slight, and begged her to accede to the wishes of one

who loved her better, and who had the means of placing her as his wife in comparative affluence. Nance refused ; no, she would die, but she would not give her hand to John Walters.

Weeks passed on, Frank continued silent, and Walters urged his suit. Nance's treatment at the school became worse and worse, nature itself rebelled against it, and she was haunted with the dread of being seized with such an illness as might prevent her from leaving her bed, and render her helplessly dependant on those with whom she lived. Her resolution began to give way under the influence of increasing misery, and Nance had left Mrs. Ormonde with a promise to call again on the following day, and if after another night of anxious and conflicting thought she could see no other remedy for the heart-crushing evils that beset her, she would consent ! It was a promise extorted with many a bitter tear, but it was given at last. Next day she came ;

her eyes were bright and restless, and there was a flush of fever on her pale cheek. She met Mrs. Ormonde with a look of sadness she had never witnessed in her before. She took the old woman's hand, pressed it to her lips and covered it with tears.

"Well, Nance, what have you resolved to do, what answer will I have to give to Mr. Walters, he is to call to-day."

"I do not, cannot love him," sobbed Nance.

"He knows that, and yet he thinks you will make him a good wife."

"I have toiled for seven months, until I can work no longer. I wish I were dead!" said poor Nance, covering her face with her hands.

"Nay, nay, you will be the richest wife in Limehouse, and the loveliest one; cheer up, this Frank Duncan has deserted you."

"His ear has been poisoned," cried Nance, "or he never would have done so. I parted with the miniature he gave me to support a

dying mother. I have never known a happy hour since then. I have worked night and day in hopes of redeeming it—it is gone—and Frank has returned and deserted me, it has come to this! Oh! I wish I was in the churchyard by my poor mother's side!"

"Nay, Nance, why think more of that. Mr. Walters admires you for your conduct; he will settle all his fortune on you; he loves you, Nance, better than you can love Frank Duncan."

"Oh! no, no, no!" cried Nance clasping her hands. "If Frank knew how I loved him in spite of all. I never lay my head upon my pillow without praying for blessings on him. I never waken but he is my first thought—no, no, and if Walters does love me as you say, I could not help loving Frank Duncan still."

"But he has forsaken you. He is now Captain of an Indiaman, and doubtless wishes to forget you."

“Never! by Heaven! Never!” shouted a manly voice, as the crazy door of Mrs. Ormonde’s humble apartment was burst open, and Frank Duncan caught Nance in his arms, as uttering a wild cry of joy, she fell upon his bosom. “Forget you my own Nance! never! Look up—look up.—Ah! Let me kiss away those tears; dear suffering girl! I overheard it all; look up, look up, my own sweet Nance, oh! do not weep—forgive me!”

Nance hung upon him, and with the fresh tears starting to her eyes whispered, “Frank, why did you desert me?”

He replied by kneeling at her feet; and heedless of the tears that trembled in his own eyes, looking up in her face and praying for forgiveness—“I was deceived; cruelly deceived,” cried he. “I came here, my own Nance, for I could resist no longer, to make inquiries for you, when I heard your voice and listened—“See, see,” said he drawing the miniature

from his bosom, "I have regained it, accept it again, and say you have forgiven me!"

Nance grasped it eagerly.

"How pale, how ill you look: you have suffered much," said the generous sailor, "but tell me—explain all—your mother is dead—nay, weep not—you shall never have cause again. Tell me, dear Nance, what all your trials have been. I am rich now, Nance, and we shall all be happy."

Nance could not speak, but Mrs. Ormonde explained all. The young sailor listened with difficulty, and uttered the fiercest self-reproach for having doubted the purity of the gentle being who now, with a woman's fondness, became his own advocate with himself.

It was a happy hour; Nance with tears, but not of grief, trembling in her mild blue eyes, listened to him as he ran over all his future plans of happiness; it seemed as if former

days had come again, and she had never known sorrow.

Why linger on a tale already told? The orphan, with her kind protectress, that night removed to other lodgings; and ere two Sabbath days had passed, Nance Campbell was led a happy wife, by a husband whom she loved, to a cheerful home which she called her own.

CHRONICLE THIRD.

F A M E.

VOL. I.

K

FAME.

CHAPTER I.

Woman has nought to do with fame,
The quiet of home is hers ;
A wife and a mother's sacred name
Are the titles her heart prefers.
Sweeter are these to her gentle ear,
Than the shouts of applauding throngs to hear !
Proud man may toil upon honor's field,
Till the light of his youth grows dim !
A stainless sword, and a knightly shield,
And the victor's crown for him !
But woman ! thy place is the myrtle grove,
Where warbling birds sing notes of love !

“ BUT had you not better see the little fellow
yourself, Agnes ? ” said Mr. Ashmore to his

wife, as he sat sipping his wine over the fire :
“ you hear Mary says he is very feverish, and it may be necessary to have some advice.”

“ How *can* you be so silly Henry ?” said the lady addressed, raising her eyes with somewhat of a sneer from the paper into which she was pouring, ‘ the sweet and bitter fancies,’ of a poet’s brain, “ don’t you know that nurses are always frightened at trifles, and like to show their importance by sending for mamma whenever they fancy baby’s finger aches ? Besides, I can *depend* upon Mary to do all that is needful for little Charles.” Mrs. Ashmore snuffed the wax-light, and resumed her pen, but apparently by its frequent want of mending, her thoughts did not flow so freely as before this interruption. The husband ventured another question of some trifling import, merely to break the silence.

“ Dear, I wish you would not talk,” said the fair Blue ; “ don’t you see (glancing her eye

'in a fine frenzy rolling' at the French clock on the mantle-shelf,) 'tis past eight, and I must have this article finished for Jackson to-night—aye, and sent too, or there will be no chance of its insertion this month; and that hateful Miss Smith is daily gaining ground with the readers of the magazine—I wish there were not so many clever women." The husband smiled, and in his heart cordially joined in the sentiment expressed by his wife, though probably from a very different feeling.

"Well, Agnes! then there is no chance of my having a game at chess this evening, I suppose?" said poor Ashmore with a half-suppressed sigh.

"Oh! chess, no—I wish you had dined at the club to-day, and were not always watching me when I am writing, Henry; 'tis very tiresome."

"I certainly should have found a better dinner, Mrs. Ashmore, had I dined *from home*

—if dinner it might be called ; for I have seen nothing but that cold mutton on the table these two days, and though I care as little about eating as any man, you should remember, Agnes (added the speaker good-humouredly) that ‘not even love can live on flowers,’ and when a poor devil has been thrashing at business all day, and returns home at six o’clock, wearied and harassed by the vexations he has encountered, he *does* expect a warm smile and a hot joint to greet his return.”

This gentle rebuke touched even the undomestic Agnes, and for a moment the woman triumphed over the authoress ; she arose and embracing her husband, promised in future she would be more careful of his comforts.

“ Well, then, Agnes, pour me out another glass of wine, and go and see poor Charles. Mary may be very careful, but it is right a mother’s eye should judge of his state herself.”

With rather an ill grace, this very natural wish was complied with, and Mrs. Ashmore having held a brief consultation with Mary returned and informed her husband that it was "only a tooth being cut through, and doubtless the little sufferer would in the morning be himself again." Thoughtless mother ! did the flushed cheek and heavy breathing of thine infant, as he slept, awaken no throb of anxious tenderness in the maternal bosom ? It did *not* ; for *there* ambition had usurped the place of love ! The pen was again in requisition, and Ashmore, after having yawned through another half hour, unable to extract a word of conversation, in despair sauntered out to "take a little turn," as he called it, before tea.

At the corner of the street however he encountered two friends who were going to the theatre, and persuaded him to be of the party. To the theatre succeeded supper at a coffee-house—to supper, a look in at a fashionable house of

play; and it was three in the morning ere Ashmore's knock for admittance was answered by the drowsy housemaid, who sat up, by her mistress's orders to receive him! The infatuated wife having finished and sent off the important literary packet, had been some hours retired, and was for this time at least spared the pang of reading in the flushed and inebriated countenance of her husband, the seeds of evil her own hands were planting, and the future wretchedness she was heaping up for herself and her offspring! When a man's home is rendered uncomfortable by a *wife's neglect*, she who makes it so is **ALONE** responsible for the errors he may commit when driven abroad. Tremble, ye women who sit at ease on this point, for assuredly ye *shall* answer for the errors of such wanderers.

Such is the opening scene of this little history; but I will go back a short period, to inform my readers that Henry Ashmore was a

young merchant of good family and prospects in life, and that three years before my tale commenced he had married Agnes Leslie, whom he had then every reason to believe would render his home a happy one. Agnes was a beautiful girl of nineteen—possessed of some genius, which an education, more superficial than substantial, had called at an early period of life into play; she contributed to many of the leading magazines, could write elegant poetic trifles, and found no difficulty in composing a pretty melody; these accomplishments rendered her much sought after in the circles in which she moved, and the spark of literary ambition was easily fanned into a flame! Love and Henry Ashmore had for awhile been powerful rivals to Fame in the breast of Agnes Leslie; but no sooner did she become Mrs. Ashmore, secure in the possession of the two former, than the phoenix arose from the half smothered ashes and

AMBITION became lord of the ascendant in her bosom.

Flattered and carressed, the talents of the young and beautiful matron assumed a brilliancy they could not have attained during the period of mere girlhood ; and three years had raised Mrs. Ashmore to a pitch of distinction, of which her wildest imaginings had never dreamed.

In short, by a chain of fortunate events, very uncommon to the literary character, Mrs. Ashmore was the fashion of the day, and the leading star of light literature wherever she appeared.

HER name was the passport to notoriety,—and certain acceptance with every bookseller and music publisher in town, attended the effusions of her pen. She had the applause of every voice, save one ;—the “ still small voice” of conscience, which hourly whispered that in the thirst for Fame (that draught too intoxica-

ting for female lips), she was sacrificing all those holier charities of life, which should be everything to the heart of WOMAN.

Such was the state of things on the evening of the conversation with which this sketch commenced. The husband while he felt proud of the praises he heard bestowed upon his wife, could not conceal the truth from his own heart, that his home might have been a happier one had there been less talent in its chief ornament ; and though he looked over a thousand little neglects in domestic duties which had formed the pride of a less gifted woman than Agnes, he could not but feel that his comforts were destroyed by her close pursuit of studies, which, while they shed a radiance over the path of life abroad, were not calculated to brighten the fireside *tête-à-tête* at home.

As their family increased, these convictions became every day more bitterly confirmed to Ashmore, in the unruliness and disobedience of

his neglected children, and the railings of their irritated mother, whenever their voices rose to a pitch discordant to her ear. True it was, that the faithful Mary deserved all the confidence her mistress reposed in her ; true it was, that her example taught the little Ashmore's what they *did* know, and rendered them less ignorant and unamiable than if left entirely without her guidance ; but the early germs of virtue in the heart, which none but a mother can properly cultivate, were withering away for want of her fostering care.

Time passed on, and though Mr. and Mrs. Ashmore never disagreed, yet a coldness and reserve had sprung up between them, that threatened to end in a complete stagnation of all tenderness. They were seldom together, except at those places of amusement whither the spirit of fashion or custom led them ; and Ashmore did not now wait for his wife's bidding to dine at his club, or absent himself

from home. And Agnes, while she was courted and admired, was she happy? Did that FAME, the possession of which she had coveted, as her greatest good, repay her for the toil she endured still to retain it? Ah! no; the empty bubble was dearly paid for; as her hectic cheek and sunken eye, that told of the vigils she endured, too plainly testified.

Who, save those who have pursued the phantom, can tell of the heartburnings—the loss of rest—of peace—the disregard almost of life itself, that awaits the infatuated votary of literary fame? “None but the author knows an author’s cares!” Such cares as woman, if she be a wife and mother, save in a very minor degree, should *never* know! Yet such were undermining the health of Agnes, and at the very summit of ambition, when her foot was on the top of the pedestal, she was seized and stricken as for death! And He who chasteneth in mercy gave the blow.

Disgusted with the increasing coldness and indifference of his wife, Mr. Ashmore gradually more and more estranged himself from his home; and that heart where virtue was the natural growth of the soil, became withered, and, in time, seared to all the better affections of its nature. The tavern—the club-room—nay, even the gaming house, were too often the resorts to which the despairing husband was driven by his wife's mistaken love of notoriety, and decreasing fortune and happiness were but the natural consequences of such a course of living.

The consciousness of these truths, which despite all her endeavours to disregard them, *would* force themselves at times upon the mind of Agnes—a latent spark of unfounded jealousy which kindled itself into a flame, added to over-excitement and mental exertion, brought on an attack of fever, which threatened to terminate her existence.

All that now passed was but as a fearful dream ; yet, in the pauses of delirium, she recognised the same gentle form bending over her pillow—the touch of the same gentle hand administering the cup of cooling to her parched and fainting lip ! It was Mary ! with one hand supporting the almost dying mother, while in the other she cradled the helpless babe that had never known that mother's care.

And here, though the personages in this little history exist but in the imagination of the writer, she would willingly confess the character of Mary, though imperfectly sketched, is a portrait from life ; and should the eyes of the individual for whom it is intended glance over these pages, may she accept this feeble tribute offered to her faithful services and many virtues.

In the intoxicating pursuit in which poor Agnes had been engaged, she had not only lost sight of her earthly but her heavenly

duties. Completely immersed in the vortex of the feverish life she had chosen, though virtuously educated, yet of no fixed principles, for the last few years she had not

“ Her God addressed
In grateful praise, or humble prayer ;
And if his word was not her jest—
Dread thought !—it had not been her care.”

What were her reflections when consciousness returned, and she found herself stretched on the bed of sickness, prostrated in body and mind, to the weakness of an infant ? For the first time the veil was removed from her eyes, and she shrank from the hideous spectacle, that the mind of genius, unworthily employed, presented to her view ! Her husband—that husband whom her unrelaxing pursuit of other objects had rendered almost an alien to her bosom was, with a party of friends, making a tour in France. The thought that she might die ere he could be recalled, and see her repentant

tears, was the iron that entered deepest into her soul! Her children stood beside her couch, but fear, rather than love, was painted in their countenances; they had never known a mother's tenderness, and therefore could anticipate no loss from this bereavment; constraint sat upon their features when in her presence; and she envied Mary the possession of that genuine affection which should have belonged but to a mother.

The daily papers teemed with regrets for the illness of the gifted Mrs. Ashmore. The door was half battered down by thronging inquirers, and the table of her boudoir was covered with embossed cards of condolence; but no friend sat beside her bed to whisper the consolations of affection; no murmured prayer ascended to heaven in her behalf, from the lips of friendship or of love (save in the solitary instance of her faithful domestic). In the midst of admiring crowds, she felt she was alone. No! *not* alone

—for He who snatches the guilty one as “a brand from the burning,” was hovering over that couch of sickness with healing in his wings !

It was a beautiful July evening, and Mrs. Ashmore was sitting, for the first time since her illness, at the open window of a quiet cottage near Richmond, whither she had been removed for change of air;—when she heard the tread of a well-known step in the little garden, and in another instant she was clasped to the bosom of her husband ! With all the haste of reviving love, he had obeyed the summons which informed him of the illness of Agnes, and three weeks from the time of her seizure, stood before his convalescent and repentant wife !

“ I do not wish you to give up your laurels, Agnes,” said Ashmore smiling in reply to her declaration of renouncing all pretensions to authorship ; “ I only desire they may not so

entirely overshadow your prospect, as to leave no vista for affection to shine through."

Mutual confessions of error were made in all the confidence of former love, and the hopes and prospects of happier days again dawned upon their re-united hearts. Ashmore, convinced of his wife's sincerity, promised and *did* renounce his evil pursuits; but habits long continued are not easily broken, and Agnes felt that much still was required in weaving the cords that must draw back her husband's esteem; without therefore making a parade of the sacrifices her good resolutions suggested, they were quickly carried into effect, and almost imperceptibly all vestiges of the *Bas Bleu* vanished from her apartments, and the desk and papers of the authoress gave place to the chess-board, or the social amusements of the day! It needed no effort on her part for Agnes to render herself agreeable even to the accustomed eye of a husband; and

Ashmore without a sigh forsook his clubs and his companions for the fireside of his own domestic hearth. And Agnes—how ended all her dreams of fame and happiness? were they *realised*? They were;—not in the fading garland that hangs upon the Poet's tomb; but in the living joy which diffused itself around wherever she appeared in woman's brightest character—that of the WIFE and the MOTHER!

CHRONICLE FOURTH.

THE INVALID.

THE INVALID.

CHAPTER I.

"Teach me to feel another's woe."

POPE.

Nothing can be more common than for persons of a naturally robust and healthy temperament of mind and body, who feel not those "infirmities flesh is heir to," nothing, I repeat, is more common than for such persons to ridicule the want of that greatest of all blessings, Health, in others; and to attribute the ailments of those around them to the effect

of temper, or what is called "nervous irritability." Instead, therefore, of benefitting more largely by the mercies extended to themselves, and feeling a thankful gratitude for the boon bestowed by their munificent Creator, blessings to them become curses to others by causing a callousness to the sufferings of their fellow creatures; and like Pharoah of old, they "harden their hearts" against conviction, and against belief.

Such, at least, was the effect produced upon Walter Beverly, the hero of the brief page in life I am about to chronicle. And should there be one among my readers who is conscious of lacking the "milk of human kindness" in his own bosom, may the catastrophe of this little narrative produce that change so "devoutly to be wished."

Walter Beverly was a young man possessed of fine animal spirits, flowing from a consti-

tution which (saving in the maladies incidental to childhood) had never known a day's wear, either from sickness or sorrow ; he seemed indeed the favorite of fortune, in person, wealth, and manners. Generous and manly, gifted with many good and noble qualities, his detestation of every thing approaching to cowardice or effeminacy in his own sex, was little short of hatred ; even the gentler part of the creation, woman, pleased Walter more when the extreme delicacy of her sex was discarded, and none of those pretty yet misplaced graces of timidity which beauty is apt to assume, were put in practice to attract admirers. A young man moving in the circle Beverly did move in, was not likely to be long in finding a wife ; Julia St. Pierre, the only daughter of a French refugee, drew her first breath in England, whither her parents had flown with what wealth they could hastily collect at the breaking out of the revolution. Educated as an

Englishwoman (for she had known no other country,) young, lovely, and accomplished, she soon attracted the eyes, and fixed the roving heart of Walter, in those circles where "they met;" and though he was the very opposite in character, for hers was "the mild lustre of the early morn, and his the radiance of the risen day," he soon became a lover—wooed and won—and they were united.

There was a hectic streak on the face of the fair bride, that to all eyes, save those of the delighted husband, seemed the herald of an early grave. That direful disease, the simoon of our climate, deadly as that of the eastern desert—since with a like remorselessness it sweeps away all that come within its influence Consumption, had already sowed its baneful seeds in her bosom, to spring up ere long, and desolate the soil.

I pass over the early period of their married life—like an English April, it had its showers

and its sunshine, but no cloud of any magnitude rested upon it; Walter was justly proud of his beautiful wife, and delighted to instruct her in the more robust accomplishments of her sex; under his tuition, though naturally timid, she became an expert horse-woman, and the husband was never more in his element (to use a nautical phrase) than when attending in the double capacity of esquire and tutor, at the bridle rein of his graceful Julia.

Time rolled on, and olive branches sprang around their table; but, alas! they did not bring increase of happiness; the wife's duties were now to become subservient to those of the mother—nature demanded it, and Julia was obliged to relinquish many of those pleasures, innocent in themselves, which became otherwise when they drew away her attention from her offspring. These little sacrifices on her part were made without a sigh, for a mother can know no happiness like that of

which she is the centre at home. But with a man it is different ; he does not feel the ties of those dear ones to bind him so closely. Walter was not naturally fond of children, and the scenes of domestic life were too tame for his ardent temperament ; he loved to mount the wave, rather than glide down the smooth calm stream ; and his spirit became stagnant when it was not excited by constant activity. This was the hour of his trial—now was to be put to the test the oath, “ to love and to cherish,” which he had sworn to her, who had consented to share his destiny at the altar of her God.

The health of Mrs. Beverly gradually gave way, under the many anxieties from which a mother, let her situation in life be ever so exalted, cannot be exempt. How little in after life do any of us appreciate the unceasing fatigue, the unwearying tenderness which anticipates the steps of time, and furrows the gentle cheek of Woman with wrinkles, not of years

When Julia became no longer able, with pleasure to herself, to accompany her husband to those scenes of gaiety, or endure the late hours of the fashionable society in which she had hitherto been his partner, Walter bore the bereavement in sullen silence, or if when increasing disease forced a gentle complaint from the lips of his suffering wife, a word of recognition that he heard her *did* break from him, it was such as blistered, rather than soothed the wound it fell upon. Soon, however, this gloomy calm, like the silence of nature before a tempest, burst forth in anger and ridicule, and audible wishes "that he had not married a woman to fill his house with doctors and exhaust his purse with fees!" were common salutations of Beverly.

"Julia was only nervous," he would say to her friends, "only nervous, and wanted rousing;" and under this impression the poor, sinking invalid was often forced into gaiety,

under the pretended search after that health which for her was only to be obtained in the quiet shades of retirement, or the holy calm of domestic peace. Often when the unpitied Julia returned from such scenes, and was conscious that the tide of health would never again flow through her wasted veins, would she gaze on the little flock bounding to meet her, and mentally, offer a prayer for their protection when her maternal arms could no longer be their shield; often, too, while resting on her harp, whose tuneful chords her fingers had ceased to make obedient to their touch, would she weep over her youngest-born, the blue-eyed cherub, who like the personification of Pity's dove, flew to nestle and repose in her wounded bosom.

Gently as the fading light of the melting rainbow, tint after tint did her beauty pass, almost unperceived away. She had long ceased to breathe a murmur, for it was sure to call up

a cloud on the brow, or an unmanly sneer on the lip of the heartless Beverly, who now that his wife's accomplishments and beauty could no longer minister to his vanity, shewed himself the selfish being his own passions had made him.

Despite his better reason, he would not be convinced that the hectic flush and bright blue eye of Julia could betoken aught but health; and to conciliate his wayward temper, that fevered cheek and wildly illumined eye often were clothed in smiles, when the worm was gnawing at the aching heart.

"There, now you look something like yourself, Julia," said the selfish Walter one evening when, in obedience to his wishes, she had placed herself at the harp which stood beside the sofa, on which her weakness obliged her to recline. "Come, you only want rousing," as I told Dr. Berkley yesterday, when he shook his head, and pulled a long professional face;

"illness is all an idea—fancy—making women a trouble to themselves, and a burden to all around them. It only wants courage and nerve to throw it off, as one changes one's dress; and really, Julia, yours is becoming quite a worn-out garment—I am tired of seeing it."

A melancholy smile was the only answer to this ill-timed pleasantry.

"Come," he continued, "play some of those lively airs you had used to be so fond of before we were plagued with these cursed brats, who have worn your very life out. Be off, sir, out of the way!" said the unnatural father to the trembling boy who sat at his mother's knee; and suiting the "action to the word," hurled him with his foot to the other side of the apartment, with a violence that made the floor echo beneath his fall.

The spirit of the Mother could not brook this reviling, showered upon herself, she had

long borne calmly and without a murmur, but if even the most timid animal will turn and defend her young when attacked, how much more will not woman dare in defence of her offspring? So it was with the wife of Beverly—every feeling, the dearest, the most sacred in her bosom's shrine, had been outraged, by him too who of all others should have respected and upheld them! And for the first time words of bitter and reproaching import escaped her lips. Remonstrance only produced the opposite effect intended, on so obdurate a heart—and Walter Beverly, the husband and father of those he had wronged, quitted his home, to spend elsewhere a gayer evening, than that he might now anticipate within its walls.

Late was the hour when he returned under the two-fold influence of wine and passion; those demons ever ready to join compact together and make common cause against

erring man. Stupified and weary with the orgies of the club, whither he had flown, to stifle in noise and riot, the upbraidings of the "still small voice" that *will* be heard within us, it was not 'till the beams of the noonday sun shone into their chamber, that Beverly awoke to consciousness—and to look upon the inanimate form beside his pillow.—Mrs. Beverly *was dead!* exhausted by the vexation of the evening, heart-sick, and heart-broken, she had softly kissed her children as they slept, and retired some hours before her husband's return; and alone, in the silence and deep hush of midnight—that awful power who bids "the weary be at rest," had visited her sorrows, and recalled her pure spirit to Him who gave it.

* * * * *

Some few moments elapsed ere the horror-struck Walter could fully arouse his bewildered senses, to comprehend the fatal truth. He bent his ear to listen—no gentle breathing

answered to his hopes, and told that life was yet an inmate of that fragile tenement ;—he touched the pale cheek over which the long eyelash hung like a jetty fringe, with a tear still moist upon it. His hand recoiled from the icy thrill which that touch sent through his veins ; there is no mistaking the touch of Death.

To summon the servants and medical aid was now but the work of a moment, but in vain,—the vital spark was quenched for ever. In all the stupor of grief, too agonized, “ too deep for tears,” the wretched man stood gazing on the form before him. Yes, there she lay—the bride of his choice, the wife of his bosom, the mother of his children—the shadow of beauty yet throwing its twilight loveliness over her features, even as the lunar rainbow retains the outline of the brighter arch of day, but gleams colder and paler in the chilly moonlight. At that awful moment what would the husband

and the father not have given to recall but the last twelve hours of his existence—to have caused the dial of Time to go back as it did of yore? How did every unkind word he had uttered, every offensive look of which he had been guilty, set themselves in battle array against him, and rise from the cells of his own heart, like spectres of terror to upbraid him! The wolf that fed on the life-stream of the Spartan thief, the tooth of the viper, or the three fanged sting of the scorpion, are nothing contrasted with the agonies of an accusing conscience.

Yet the lesson did not lose its effect on the heart of Beverly, a revolution which years could not have accomplished, was now the work of one little hour. Prostrate beside his desolate couch, with his children gathered around him, the first prayer Beverly had uttered, since he knelt in boyhood at his mother's knee, broke from his humiliated soul,

for forgiveness of the past and direction for the future; and there too on that solemn shrine, with the weeping pledges of love before him, did he vow to consecrate his future life to their welfare, and to be henceforth a father in affection, as in name. The Spirit of her he had injured bent down and hallowed the prayer, and the recording angel, who rejoices over "the sinner that repenteth," registered the oath in heaven.

Years have fled by, since the period when this history commenced, and in the fondly attached father, watching and guiding the expanding minds of his affectionate children, no traces can be recognised of the early failings of Walter Beverly.

CHRONICLE FIFTH.

LOVE

LOVE.

(A chronicle of the Provinces.)

CHAPTER I.

"Time brings a cure for many a wound,
 And heals full many a mourner's smart,
 But, ah! what opiate e'er was found
 To lull the restless broken heart?
 Yes! there's a balm for lighter woes,
 A cure for half the ills we prove,
 A joy for many a tear that flows—
 But, there's no balm for blighted love!"

THOUGH Sonnemburgh could boast of many a
 lovely girl, Ernestine Selert eclipsed them all.

She was the pride of the village, the "cynosure of neighbouring eyes," Florian Heilger had loved Ernestine from infancy, the passion was mutual, and till the moment of separation arrived, they were strangers to the miseries so often attendant upon love.

Their birth and fortunes were equal, and their parents with joy consented to their union. "I have only one condition to make," said the father of Florian to his son, "which is that your marriage be deferred for three years, during which period you must be separated. You are now only eighteen; enter the army, and see a little of the world. Ernestine is but fifteen; she is yet too young for a wife. Go then, my son, distinguish yourself in the field of honor, and at the expiration of three years, return and claim your bride." The heart of the young lover beat high;—at eighteen, who would not be a soldier?

In a few days a commission was obtained,

and Florien prepared to join his regiment. He pressed the hand of his father to his lips ; he could hardly utter " farewell !"

The parting with Ernestine was yet more painful ; tenderly locked in each other's arms, they mingled their tears together. Florien was the first who assumed any degree of composure ; and after swearing eternal fidelity, he kissed the pale cheek of the weeping girl, and tore himself away, and was some miles on his journey from Sonnemburg before he was conscious he had quitted it.

For several days Ernestine shut herself in her apartment, and gave way to the deepest melancholy. She no longer mixed with society, for she could no longer meet Florien. Days and weeks glided on in tedious monotony ; how different from those they had passed together ! Weary of every thing, and heedless of what she did, poor Ernestine proceeded in her usual employments ; one image was ever

present to her mind ; one spark of hope alone shone through the gloom which reigned there. Her lover's parting vows yet vibrated in her ear ; his kisses yet dwelt upon her lips ; and as with streaming eyes she watched the sunbeams sinking behind her native mountains, she thought with pensive pleasure, " his absence is one day shortened." Poor Ernestine ! thou wert not the first, and will not be the last to whom the setting sun must furnish such reflections.

Florien too, counted the time with impatience, but he did not yield to such regret.

He had left his native village for the first time, and he looked with delight on the countries through which he passed. He felt interested in the manners and customs of a new race of people ; and to a young man there is a charm in novelty.

The parade and gaiety of a military life

were new to him, and the mirth of his companions lightened the pang of absence.

The first year of his voluntary exile was spent in the camp, where he greatly distinguished himself and gained the love of his fellow-officers and the approbation of his General. War being over, the second winter he was quartered at Lyons. A handsome young officer is sure of becoming a favorite wherever he goes. *Thérèse*, the lovely daughter of his commander, was struck with his fine person and elegant address, and she tried by all the little arts she was mistress of, to make him sensible of her partiality.

During the evenings he spent at her father's (and they were not a few) she sang to him little plaintive airs, or repeated part of some favorite author! Music and poetry were alike resorted to, to pass away the time; and every attention that a female can offer a handsome man was paid by *Thérèse*. *Florien* often

thought of the lovely Ernestine, and would sometimes fall into a deep reverie, even in Therèse's presence; but the lively French girl, running to her harp, struck up some playful air, well calculated to dispel melancholy; and when the young soldier raised his eyes, he encountered those of the enchanting Therèse, beaming with love and tenderness. Then rallying him on his dejection, she practised a thousand of those little tendernesses which her countrywomen know so well how to employ.

But let us be just: when Florian retired, the image of Ernestine alone accompanied him, he thought of her with sorrow, and something like remorse. In his dreams he beheld her, gently and lovely as in their days of infancy. He arose with this impression on his mind, and vowed to banish Therèse for ever from his thoughts. For a few days he faithfully kept his resolution, but he saw her weep, look pale, and gaze dejectedly upon him.

At twenty the seducing glances of a beautiful girl are very difficult to resist ; and business with her father, or some other pretext, conducted Florien every day into the presence of the too fascinating Frenchwoman.

Time thus passed, and the three years were drawing to a close. During his absence Florien had received many letters from home and from Ernestine.

At first he answered them with alacrity, and communicated every thing respecting himself, and the scenes in which he was engaged, that he thought would interest his readers :—by degrees however his letters grew more reserved, and less frequent ; and for the last six months he had neither sent nor received any tidings from Sonnemburg. He began to feel uneasy, and resolved to fly from the enchantments of Lyons, and return home. The leisure of a Soldier's life disgusted him ; his brother officers laying aside the discipline of

the camp, were beguiling the hours of peace in riot and dissipation. The lovely Therése occupied the time that was not spent with his companions ; he was her constant attendant at the theatre, the balls and other places of public resort ; and as he was the only officer from whom she would receive such attentions, his vanity was flattered, and his self-love lulled to rest the painful emotions that would sometimes arise in his bosom. But of becoming the husband of the fair Frenchwoman Florien never dreamed. What then were his sensations when, one day, her father taking him aside, asked him if he were serious, and offered him his daughter in marriage. " Though my Therése may look higher," said the General, " you are a brave soldier, and I shall feel proud in calling you my son. My daughter's fortune is ample ; you possess the best fortune of a soldier—Honour. Take her, then, my son, and a father's approbation will attend your

union." The youth gazed on the speaker in stupid silence. The last words, however, restored him to his faculties, and he awoke at once from his dangerous infatuation. His heart was full ; and he warmly thanked his commander for his noble intentions.

" As a sister," said he, " I shall ever esteem your daughter ; but as a wife—" he faltered, and hid his face in his hands,—“ it cannot be. I am already engaged, in my native country—bound by every tie of honour—by vows which I cannot violate.”

All was at once explained. The reproaches of a father fell heavily upon him ; he bore them with calmness, for he felt he deserved them.

He threw up his commission, and withdrew from the enraged parent ; and the following morning, with a heavy heart, prepared to quit Lyons for ever.

He could not however resist one stolen inter-

view with Therèse to bid her farewell. She wept bitterly at parting, but did not reproach him ; her pale cheeks and swollen eyes were more eloquent than words ; they spoke forcibly to the heart of Florien, and staggered his resolutions. Yet Therèse was young, volatile, and lovely ; he had not been her first lover, and would not be the last. This reflection lessened the agony of Florien, and with averted eyes he bade her adieu.

At the first onset of his journey he was sad, but as he drew nearer home, he became more composed. Who does not forget the whole world in contemplating the scenes of infant pleasure ? Therèse's love, her father's anger, all faded from his mind ; in imagination he already heard the voices of his mother and Ernestine welcoming their wanderer back. He recalled with delight the simple manners of his countrymen, so different from those of the polished city he had quitted. In the scenes of

gaiety and pleasure in which he had of late been engaged, his own manners had attained much of their refinement, but it was at the expence of that purity of heart which he possessed when he left home. It was not without a sigh that he thought on the change which so short a period had made in his mind, and he inwardly cursed the hour when he first entered the world of dissipation and folly. With these reflections he arrived at a little village, two days journey from Sonnemburg. The day was fast declining, and he resolved to pass the night there. After taking some refreshment, he quitted the inn, and strolled out into the village. It was the First of May, every thing seemed to denote peace and innocence, and the whole scene harmonized with his feelings.

When Florien arrived at the top of the principal street, he saw a cypress tree, tastefully ornamented with white crape, planted

before a house that by its neatness, appeared to belong to some one of consequence in the place. Many other houses were shut up, and everything around bore traces of the deepest sorrow. It was evident some person had died who was regretted by the whole village. He walked into the churchyard; two men were preparing a grave. From the church he heard the solemn peal of the organ, and at intervals the soft chaunting of female voices. As Florien was advancing to question the men, a group of village girls, habited in white, issued slowly from the church. They approached a little bank, near which Florien stood unobserved.

“ Poor Zelig ! so young and so lovely,” said one. “ Ah, who can reckon upon life ? ”

“ True, but she only wished to die,” said another.

“ And poor Julien ! ” observed a third, “ how wretched he is ; if she had loved him, she might now have been a happy bride ; and

these flowers, (pointing to a garland she had in her hand,) would have been her bridal wreath; alas! they must now wither on her grave."

The speaker wept; a beautiful girl now advanced from the church, and joined the rustic mourners. Her dress, which was white, was ornamented with flowers, a black cross was suspended from her neck, and on her head she wore a chaplet of cypress. Her countenance, though it had a mournful expression, was sweet and dignified. Florien thought he had never beheld a lovelier. In her hand she carried a crown of lilies and a small basket of other flowers. The young girls crowded round, and placed her on the bank. Rozelie (for that was the name her companions addressed her by) wept; Florien found it difficult to restrain his tears. He thought of Ernestine, and his heart smote him he knew not why.

• "Ah! how sad it is to die for love," said

one of the villagers, breaking the silence, "yet Zélie inflicted the same pangs on others of which she herself was suffering. Ah, Rozélie, why did she not love your brother Julien. He is so good, and so handsome, too!"

"Poor Zélie has often told me," replied Rozélie, in a voice of exquisite sweetness, "that she could only love once, and that she had not a heart to bestow. For a long time she would not believe that her lover was false. In a passion such as Zélie's, the heart, though it fears every thing, hopes too much; she thought he would return, "and then what pleasure it will be to pardon him," said my poor friend. She supported herself with such ideas, and was for six tedious months (which seemed to be so many ages)

Doomed in sad suspense to bear
The hope that keeps alive despair!

"Still he came not; and at length she heard that he was married to another in a distant

country. Her lips uttered no complaint; he had deceived her, but she still adored him. Though false, we can never upbraid those we have sincerely loved. Her grief did not appear to the eye of the passing stranger. A common observer would have supposed her happy; but in secret she nourished

A total hopelessness of heart
That proudly cherishes its grief
And will not with its anguish part,
That seeks not—wishes not relief.

“ In the silent hours of night, when others slept, she wept over the picture of her faithless lover. The pale moon witnessed her tears, and the first beams of morning shone ere she retired to rest. This was too much for her tender frame. ‘ He left me in May,’ said she; ‘ ere its return I shall leave the world.’ “ May is returned—and Zelig has indeed left us for ever.”

Rozelie’s voice failed her, as she concluded

this simple narrative, every word of which sank into the heart of Florien ; her young auditors rose to join the procession, which now approached. Florien slowly followed them ; he felt an interest in the fate of the deceased for which he knew not how to account. To a young mind, death in any object excites commiseration, but when youth and loveliness fall beneath its stroke, the heart is peculiarly touched, and the tender chord of pity is awakened, even by "a stranger's knell."

Six village youths, carrying flambeaux, preceded a coffin, which was borne by the like number of their companions ; before it walked an elegant young man, habited in the deepest mourning ; his arms were folded, and his eyes bent on the ground : he looked and moved the statue of despair. Florien easily discovered him to be Julien, the rejected lover of the unfortunate Zélie. The coffin was placed in the earth, and the priest made a short oration

on the uncertainty of human life, but his auditors were too deeply absorbed in their own grief to pay much attention to the exhortation of the holy man.

When it was ended, each of the young maidens advanced, and threw a few flowers into the grave. Rozelie was the last who came to pay this tribute of affection to departed virtue. The moon shed her pale light on the features of the lovely mourner as she bent over the grave of her friend. There was a calm dignity in her manner that at once awed and affected the spectators. Florien surveyed her with sensations he had never felt before. When the cold earth hid for ever all that remained of their once lovely companion, the villagers dispersed, and retired to their homes. Julien and Rozelie alone remained; neither had resolution to quit a spot which contained one so dear to them; each wished to console the other, but neither dared to break the

silence. Those only who have lingered near the grave of a beloved object can appreciate the feelings of such a moment. Florien drew near. Julien surveyed him with the calmness of despair.

"Did you know her," said Rozelie in a mournful voice, pointing to the grave; "you have taken an interest in our sorrows, for I perceived you amongst the spectators. Perhaps you are her countryman."

"No," replied Florien, "I am a stranger whom chance conducted, in this sad hour, to behold you performing the last rites of friendship. Was not your friend, then, a native of this place? Pardon my questions, but I feel interested in what I have seen, and shall often remember the victim of love."

"I have only known her a few months," replied Rozelie with sweetness, "she came to my father, who is a physician, for the recovery of her health. I loved her as a sister. She

was so gentle, so grateful for the little services we rendered her, that all the village loved her ! but alas ! our cares were useless : the disease she laboured under baffled the skill of medicine, for it was of the heart ; we had no cure for that. Her parents live many miles from our village : alas ! they have yet to learn the fate of their unhappy child."

"Her name was Zelie," said Florian, in a faltering voice.

"We called her so," said Rozelie, "but it was a fanciful name my brother gave her, and to please him she adopted it ; but her real appellation was—Ernestine ;—Ernestine Selert, of Sonnemburg. But you are ill ! what have I said to move you thus ?"

"Just Heaven ! am I a murderer?" burst from the lips of the agonized Florian, as he fell senseless to the earth. The cries of the terrified girl roused Julien from the stupor into which he had fallen. He assisted his sister to raise

the miserable youth from the ground : he opened his eyes, and faintly pronounced the name of Ernestine. " I am the murderer of your friend," said he wildly to Rozelie. " I am Florian Heilger." His astonished hearers procured him a conveyance to their father's house, where he had sufficient strength left to learn from Julien the fatal tale. A soldier, to whom Florian had given some slight offence, reported at Sonnemburg that he was married to the daughter of his General. This man asserted that he had been present at a fête given to the regiment on the occasion, and had himself seen the bride, who was young and lovely.

The long silence and neglect of Florian had given rise to some suspicions in the minds of his friends. To doubt his faithlessness was now no longer possible ; every thing confirmed the fatal falsehood. The distracted parents of Ernestine saw their child gradually sinking under the pressure of anguish and disease.

They sent her to a worthy physician, the father of Rozelie, a man of great eminence in his profession, with the vain hope that his skill, and a change of scene, would restore the unfortunate sufferer to health. Alas ! the heart of Ernestine had been too deeply wounded ; neither the skill of the physician, the tender friendship of the daughter, nor the passion with which she had inspired the son, could avail. She fell a victim to her grief. Florien stated every thing to Julien that had passed since he left home, bitterly reproaching himself as the murderer of Ernestine. Julien faithfully promised to communicate his sad story to his wretched parents. He pressed the hand of the weeping Rozelie to his lips, and bade an affectionate adieu to her afflicted brother. Nature could bear no more ; his reason fled, and calling wildly on the name of Ernestine, " his murdered love," the next morning the young soldier breathed his last in those arms.

which, but a few days before, had clasped the dying form of his Ernestine.

The same moon which had witnessed the funeral rites of the ill fated girl, shone upon her lover's grave, and they repose by the side of each other.

CHRONICLE SIXTH.

THE

TRUANT HUSBAND.

THE TRUANT HUSBAND.

CHAPTER I.

" The painful vigil may I never know
That anxious watches o'er a wandering heart."

Mrs. TIGHE.

It was past midnight, and she sat leaning her pale cheek on her hand, counting the dull ticking of the French clock that stood on the marble chimney-piece, and ever and anon lifting her weary eye to its dial to mark the lapse of another hour. It was past midnight, and yet he returned not! She arose, and taking up the lamp, whose pale rays alone illumed the solitary chamber, proceeded with noiseless step to a small inner apartment. The curtains of

his little bed were drawn aside, and the young mother gazed on her sleeping child ! What a vivid contrast did that glowing cheek and smiling brow present, as he lay in rosy slumber, to the faded, yet beautiful face that hung over him in tears ! “ Will he resemble his father ? ” was the thought that passed for a moment through her devoted heart, and a sigh was the only answer !

’Tis his well known knock—and the steps of the drowsy porter echoed through the lofty hall, as with a murmur on his lip, he drew the massy bolts and admitted his thoughtless master. “ Four o’clock, Willis, is it not ? ” and he sprang up the staircase—another moment he is in her chamber—in her arms !

No reproaches met the truant husband, none—save those she could not spare him, in her heavy eye, and faded cheek—yet these spoke to his heart.

“ Julia, I have been a wandering husband.”

“ But you are come now, Charles, and all is well.”

And all was well, for, from that hour, Charles Danvers became an altered man. Had his wife met him with frowns and sullen tears, he had become a hardened libertine; but her affectionate caresses, the joy that danced in her sunken eye, the hectic flush that lit up her pallid cheek at his approach, were arguments he could not withstand. Married in early life, while he felt all the ardour, but not the esteem of love; possessed of a splendid fortune, and having hitherto had the entire command of his own pleasures, Danvers fell into that common error, of newly married men—the dread of being controlled. In vain did his parents, who beheld with sorrow the reproaches and misery he was heaping up for himself in after life, remonstrate; Charles Danvers turned a deaf ear to advice, and pursued, with compa-

nions every way unworthy of his society, the path of folly if not absolute guilt. The tavern, the club-room, the race-course, too often left his wife a solitary mourner, or a midnight watcher.

Thus the first three years of their wedded life had passed—to him in fevered and restless pleasure, to her in blighted hope or un murmuring regret. But this night crowned the patient forbearance of the neglected Julia with its just reward, and gave the death blow to folly in the bosom of Danvers. Returning with disgust from the losses of the hazard table, her meekness and long suffering touched him to the soul; the film fell from his eyes, and Vice, in her own hideous deformity, stood unmasked before him.

Ten years have passed since that solitary midnight, when the young matron bent in tears over her sleeping boy. Behold her now! still in the pride of womanhood, surrounded by ther cherub faces, who are listening ere they

go to rest to her sweet voice, as it pours forth to the accompaniment of her harp an evening song of joy and melody ; while a manly form is bending over the music-page to hide the tear of happiness and triumph that springs from a swelling bosom, as he contemplates the interesting group. Youthful matrons ! ye who watch over a wandering, perhaps an erring heart—when a reproach trembles on your lips towards a truant husband, imitate Julia Danvers, and remember, though hymen has chains, like the sword of Harmodius, they may be covered with flowers ; that unkindness and irritability do but harden, if not wholly estrange the heart—while on the contrary patience and gentleness of manner (as water dropping on the flinty rock will in time wear it into softness) seldom fail to reclaim to happiness and virtue the Truant Husband.

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by T. C. Newby, Angel Hill, Bury.

CHRONICLES OF LIFE,

BY

MRS. CORNWELL BARON WILSON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

T. & W. BOONE, 29, NEW BOND STREET

1840.

T. C. Newby, Printer, Angel Hill, Bury.

CHRONICLE FIRST.

THE

LOVES OF TIM O'FLANNAGAN.

VOL. II'

B

THE LOVES

OF

TIM O'FLANNAGAN.

CHAPTER I.

**"I was the boy for bewitching them."
IRISH SONG.**

(THE IRISH DOCTOR.)

"WELL you are certainly one of the ugliest men I ever saw in the whole course of my life, Mr. Thomas O'Flannagan," remarked Ned Rattlebone in a contemplative manner, lolling

in his chair and with his left hand toying with his half empty wine glass—"one of the most—"

"Oh! blood and ouns, now! be easy," said the Irishman, knocking off the ashes from his cigar. "Sure its often you've told me that, and where the divil is the use of awakening unpleasant reflections in our convivial moments."

"It is the spontaneous feeling of the moment, Mr. O'Flannagan," remarked the other, "and must shew you the effect of those nightmare features of yours which, as your friend, I think it my duty to express—you look positively hideous to-night."

"Ay, houlding the mirror up to nature; and yet, Ned Rattlebone, you're not just the sort of looking-glass I would like to shave with after all—Why now in Cork," continued Tim looking down on his top boots. "I was reckoned rather a handsome man."

"You have given somebody whisky punch to flatter you friend Tim."

"The divil a bit; and as to ugly men—did you know Doctor Minnahin O'Callachan?"

"I am able to articulate the names of all my friends and acquaintance, Mr. O'Flannagan," replied the other sipping his wine, "and before I could pronounce that of your medical friend, I should require to sleep for six weeks with walnuts or potatoes in my mouth."

"Ah, well, but he *was* an ugly man, so ugly indeed that once when he came to London here, they wouldn't allow him to go into Hyde Park for fear of frightening the horses."

"Was the gentleman any relation of yours?"

"There wasn't a drop's blood between us—except once indeed, when we fought in Tipperary—but I tell you, Ned, he was a man with such a forbidding aspect, that if he'd put his hands in his breeches pockets, and look

a thorough-bred horse steadfastly in the face, the animal would turn in a cold sweat all over. He once made the Bishop of Munster's coach horses go down on their knees in bodily fear when he was taking off his hat to his riverence in the streets of Dublin. And yet he was an eminent man in his profession too. Did I ever tell you the way he had of extracting teeth?"

"Never: but just push the bottle this way. Well, now how did this Irish Doctor extract teeth—with a shillelah, eh?"

"Oh murder, no, at least not in the way of his profession—although he sometimes left vacant building distances in a man's jaw that way too."

"Well, how then, Mr. O'Flannagan?"

"If the patient was not cankerous or nervous at all, the Doctor would take out the tooth *secundem artem*—but it's throwing good latin away to speak it to you—and the business

was done in the usual way ; but if he was timid—and sure the Doctor's own looks were sometimes enough to put a man out of sorts—the patient was put into a turf basket."

"Turf basket!"

"Yes, large enough to fit any size, for it was wide at the top and narrow at the bottom, and the person to be operated upon, was put in, in an ingenious manner; that is, his head and feet were kept up, and the rest of his body pressed down until he fitted tight. And out of that he could not get without assistance, if it was to take his mother's soul out of purgatory. This the Doctor called his operation chair. Now I must tell you that although Doctor O'Callachan was as good a Christian as any man in Ireland, the people would have it he had dealings with the devil, and they ascribed his peculiar cast of countenance to his frequent intercourse and conversations with the prince of darkness. It was even said that Satan and

he got drunk together one misty evening after the Doctor had returned from a post mortem examination of a man that was hanged for putting whisky into his Reverence the Archbishop of Armagh's holy water, and thereby blinding one half of his congregation ;—but it is certain when the Doctor died, his ghost used to be seen walking round the church wearing the identical green spectacles that—”

“ Oh bother, Tim, you are digressing. How did the Doctor draw teeth in a turf basket ?”

“ Well, as I said the people generally believing that he could if he pleased charm a man's tooth out—or his nose off if required—they would sometimes give an extra fee to get the tooth disposed of in that way ; and the Doctor turned this to good account, and, as I have said, put them into a turf basket until they fitted tight.”

“ Well, well, hang the turf basket ! you

have told me that before," said Ned Rattlebone getting interested.

"Now be easy. The patient was then told, if he could only have presence of mind to whistle—but first I must tell you that the Doctor had the finest pigs in the county of Clare."

"Pigs!"

"Oh the friskiest, strongest, plumpest, dear little divils you ever set eyes on, with an old sow or two, that would have done your heart good to look upon."

"Well, but what has that to do with the tooth drawing?"

"Be easy. Well, the doctor next bandaged the eyes of the patient, and had him carried in the turf basket to the place where the pigs, young and old, were kept in confinement, and where they were usually fed twice a day. They had all mighty good appetites I can tell you, and at a signal would rush out as if the divil himself had been sneezing in their sties. The

Doctor then fastened a bit of twine to the tooth he was going to extract, and this he tied to a strong nail in the outer door. He then repeated some words in Grake, and told the patient to whistle, which he would do with some difficulty, owing to the string in his mouth, and then as if by magic out rushed the pigs, bang went the door, over went the turf basket, and out flew the tooth, which was never seen or heard of any more. The Doctor then made the patient and turf basket be taken into the house, unbandaged his eyes, and sat down with him to a strong bowl of whisky punch, and true it is that from that day the person so treated was never visited with tooth ache again—oh he was a clever man, a kind of physical genius, and as I have said one of the ugliest men mortal eyes ever looked upon.”

“ You have spoken volumes in that respect, Tim, when you say that he was less prepossessing than yourself.”

"Be easy now, and just push the bottle this way; for it's me that's very dry."

"What astonishes me the most, Tim, is," continued his companion in the same contemplative mood, "that you, with a face ugly enough to frighten herrings from the coast of Ireland, should be such a favourite with the fair sex."

"Now that's the only discreet word you have spoken the whole evening," remarked Mr. O'Flannagan lighting a cigar.

"Well, how the deuce comes it, Tim?"

"Whew!—I must not tell you that."

"On the eve too, I am told, of marrying an heiress, and a reputed beauty. Is it so?"

"The deponent declines to answer that question," replied Tim.

"Or to deny the imputation?"

"I never deny anything that is true," replied Tim with dignity.

"Well, Tim, how comes it? There is no need for mystery between friends."

“ I attribute it solely to the politeness of my manners, and the natural urbanity of my character,” said Tim looking again at his top-boots, “ as well perhaps that, barring the face, I am in other respects a handsome man.”

“ Polite ! you polite. Oh Lord ! ”

“ Yes polite, natural politeness. I take it of a faymale ancestor, that was maid of honour to one of the Queens of Ireland, and flourished in the year one thousand—”

“ Bah ! But how the deuce have you managed to get into favor ; a man like you to have a courtship, and to distance some of the finest fellows in London, requires some explanation. Are you quite sure that *you* have resorted to none of your friend the Doctor’s arts of necromancy ? ”

“ Mr. Rattlebone,” replied Tim gravely, “ I would just wish to hint that although I am blessed with a good appetite—temper, I mane;

I am not disposed to hear an insinuation derogatory to the character of a gentleman, and an officer in the militia, and therefore—Oh ! blood and ouns ! pass the bottle—I am losing wine as well as wind by these explanations.”

“ You are said to have been successful in various amours before you made a conquest of this pretty heiress ? ”

Mr. O’Flannagan shook his head.

“ No !—why now I thought—”

“ What you may have thought cannot be at all interesting to one like myself who is in possession of all the particulars—just let me tell you that—I have had one or two affairs of that kind since I came to London, but I can honestly assure you, that unless I had been doing penance for some deadly sin, it would puzzle me to find anything satisfactory in them.”

“ Well, Tim, pull the bell and let us have another bottle, and then I shall be delighted

to hear what your adventures in this way have been. Suppose we call them 'The amours of an ugly man.'"

"Now let me observe again, that I have no wish to be reminded of the peculiar opinion which you are pleased to entertain of my personal attractions; and that if any more occur to you, I hope you will be so kind as to keep them to yourself."

"Well, well, here comes the waiter. How hard you are smoking to-night, Tim."

"Oh! you don't smoke."

"No, I detest it."

"By my sowl, and I don't doubt that."

"Why?"

"Because," said Tim gravely, "you have a guilty conscience."

"And if I had, what has that to do with it?"

"Much. No man can smoke who has a guilty conscience. There must be an inward

placidity—a feeling of ‘all’s well,’ e’re any one can bring himself to that. Who ever heard of a man under sentence of death for murder calling for a pipe? No, no—it is the recreation of the innocent—of the virtuous part of the community alone.”

“Well, well, but here comes the wine; and now, Tim, for an account of your amours.”

CHAPTER II.

(THE LADY OVER THE WAY.)

“ I think I told you,” commenced Tim,
“ that I came to England by sea.”

“ It’s of no consequence whether you did or not, Mr. O’Flannagan ; as Great Britain happens to be one Island and Ireland another.”

“ I mean London,” rejoined Tim ; “ I came to London by stame, and took lodging in a genteel neighbourhood ; for I wished to give

my cards a respectable appearance, and after a few consultations with tailors, bootmakers, and one or two spirit merchants.—Oh ! it's bad whisky they sell here !—I set out to pay visits to my friends and acquaintance. Well, I saw them all, and they were all very glad to see me, for I was the only gentleman of my family that never borrowed money of them. I went to the House of Commons and the Zoological gardens : saw Lord Brougham, the Industrious Fleas, and all the other curiosities of the town, and then began to think that one might get tired of London as well as any other place.

“ I walked, read and dined, went out in the evening, came home in the morning, and then walked, read and dined, and went out in the evening again, for about three weeks, and began to fear that I was getting into dissipated habits without any great gratification to myself ; when one day, on looking out at the-

back window, I saw one of the loveliest creatures I thought had ever appeared before my eyes. She was sitting reading at a window of the opposite house—two gardens only were between us—I wished that I had had wings like a dove.”

“Turkey cock,” suggested his companion.

“Botheration now! why will you be interrupting me. I say I wished at that moment that I’d had wings to fly over the brick wall, and sit down among the flower pots and admire her all day long. I pulled up the blind and tried to catch her eye; but no, she kept them both on the book, and turned over the leaves at a rate that shewed me she was reading at a good pace.

She dropped her handkerchief sometimes too, and would bend down to pick it up, shewing thereby a neck as white as buttermilk and as delicate as otto of roses. I coughed—hemmed—drew up the window—shut it again with a

bang that threatened to crack the glass—opened it again, and in desperation was going to fire a pistol at a black tom-cat in the garden, against whom I bore a grudge—for he was always making assignations at night under my window and keeping me from sleep—in the hope that the report might make her turn her eyes from the book and look my way; when at that critical moment she arose, and throwing off a blue shawl displayed a bust and shoulders enough to startle the Pope himself. I stood in mute admiration, for I was never so much struck with the beauty of any woman; and I hope and trust I may never be so again.

“ Well, what did she do now, but open her window, bring a green watering pan, and water the plants in the flower pots on the window ledge. I coughed louder than ever; blew my nose like a trumpet, so loud indeed that several people came to the front of the adjoining

windows—but divil a look did she cast my way. I thought once more of sacrificing the cat, but he had been alarmed at my coughing and had taken to his heels; so not knowing what to do, I did nothing, but sat down and looked at her.

“ I forgot every thing when I looked upon that phaynix of womankind. I forgot even the hints my friends were in the habit of giving me about my own appearance—that I had only five hundred pounds in the world, and a horse that had fractured my collar bone, and lost me Deuce knows how many bets by backing him in another way—a right of property over an estate that nobody paid rent for, and a claim of seventy-five pounds upon a canal company that had stopped payment for want of water. I forgot everything but that I was looking upon the loveliest woman that ever gladdened the eyes of an Irish gentleman since the days of John the Baptist.”

•

“What, what the devil!”

“Be quiet—sure I cannot help feeling a little excited at the recollection of what my emotions were; and have not the power to pick and choose for the most appropriate expressions. Well, I thought my heart would have broken that day. At last *mirabile dictu* as we used to say at Doctor O’Birch’s academy. Did you know the Doctor?”

“Go on with your story.”

“Well as I said *mirabile dictu*—but it’s throwing away good wholesome latin to expend it here—this Vaynus deigned to turn her eyes towards my window, I started to my feet and made her a bow, before she could cry ‘help’—she looked mighty surprised at this,—drew herself up, and then sat down and took up the book again. Well thinks I, this is likely to be a long business, but the devil a bit will I give it up for I was fairly smitten, and had no more power to keep my eyes off her, than a pig has

to turn aside from new potatoes when they are properly cooked. Ah now, but they don't know how to feed pigs in this country. I remember—"

" Hang the pigs ! go on."

" To hang pigs is a moral and physical impossibility, as I was eye to witness when Captain O'Connochy came to his uncle's estate. The Captain was a sea faring man, and had no sympathy for the legions of pigs and poultry, which were the pride of the old Squire's heart, so being ignorant of the proper way of disposing of them, he gave orders to shoot the poultry and hang the pigs. There never was such a heart-rending scene, since the days of Vinegar Hill, as the slaughter of the poultry on that trying occasion. But the hanging of the pigs was another affair. Their necks were too large. St. Patrick himself could not have hanged them, if indeed we can suppose that a gentleman like him would not have known

better than to have attempted it.—I was present, and never shall I forget my emotions.”

“ Well well, but what of the Lady ?”

“ Oh and that’s true ; well I thought she had forgotten me, or was reading some work of the most overwhelming interest, for never did I see leaves turned over so fast, and such a repeated dropping of handkerchiefs in my life—At last—well now but I am out of breath speaking at this rate,” said Tim, pouring out a glass of wine and drinking it off. “ At last she *did* look at me. I did not rise this time, but fell back in my chair and raised my top-boots as if by accident to the back of another—and there I sat, pretending all the time that I had not been looking at her, but had been in a deep sleep. ‘ Ah,’ my darling, thinks I, ‘ I have you now.’ Well and to be sure I had, for she opened her window, and watered the plants again—it was plenty of water they got that day—and looked, and drew up the blind and pulled

it down, and drew it up again, but no, I was as inflexible as Lot's wife and never would seem to notice her, although in point of fact, I saw what she was doing with the tail of my eye. At last *she* began to cough and blow her nose—but turn about is fair play thinks I, it is now your turn to exert yourself—and by the powers! that seems to be yours at present with the wine bottle. Just push it this way. My throat is as dry as Larry O'Doeherty's fish-pond, when he went out to angle and found a donkey grazing on it."

"Well now, Tim, go on. How did all this end?"

"As you might naturally expect, in my capitulation. I rose at last—looked at her full in the face—the dear creature smiled—so did I—then I put my hand on my heart, she blushed, I suppose—but the divil a bit of me could see that at such a distance. She sat down and leaned her head in a languid manner.

‘All right,’ thinks I, so I coughed again. Oh sure I did not need to cough twice this time. I then pointed to the street, as if I wished she would come out—she shook her head—I then took up an old pen, and a letter I had just received from a whisky merchant in Dublin—as if I requested permission to write to her—but she gave the same silent answer. Well, then I made a motion like Marc Antony, meaning to enquire if she would go to the theatre—she shook her head, as much as to say she did not clearly comprehend me. I then made attitudes the way I have seen them at the Opera—but at this, the wicked devil laughed as if her sides would have cracked.

“We continued these telegraphic communications for upwards of an hour, without their leading to any satisfactory result, when at last she nodded as if assenting.

"Now unfortunately, I was so bothered at the time that I did not clearly comprehend my own signal, and on my repeating what I thought it had been, she shook her head again. And to make a long story short, we left our respective windows mutually pleased with each other, but mutually ignorant of the purport or intention of all that we had mutually intended to express."

"Well, but next day."

"There she was sure enough again. I was prepared for mounting guard this time, for I had provided a bottle of excellent whisky, a box of cigars, and the Newgate Calendar to amuse myself with during the day; and took my station at the window again. I soon had the gratification of seeing her at her old place, elegantly dressed in white, with a black scarf thrown lightly over her shoulders, and looking ten times more bewitching than ever. We

smiled to each other, and I would not at that moment have changed places with the Grand Turk or the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. I drank her health before her eyes, and prayed for long life and prosperity to her and her children after her, lit a cigar, and took up the Newgate Calendar. And then sure she took up a book with an elegant purple coloured binding, and there we read, sometimes looking to each other, and sometimes peeping at each other from the pages of our book. I stuck into the whisky at a terrible rate, and began to lose all patience at this slow way of conducting negotiations, for I wished to have an opportunity of expressing my passion to her in words and phrases, and not in dumb show like the fogleman of a marching regiment. I took my hat and cane, and pointed in the direction of the street. She shook her head, but nodded and smiled by way of postscript, as much as to

say "wait a little you devil." Well, hope deferred makes the heart sick, but in this case it made me tipsy, and the latest recollection of that day's proceedings which I had, was the lovely creature holding up her pretty fingers and reckoning four, to shew that at that hour to-morrow she would peradventure walk abroad. But blood and ouns! my throat is dry again—pass the bottle."

"Well, go on Tim."

"Be easy. Is'nt it me that's going on at a pretty good rate. Ah! Ned—if I had not fallen into the national infirmity with the whisky, I have no hesitation in saying that I would have gone over the wall in broad day-light, and expressed my devotion in elegant Irish, under the dear creature's window, but that was prevented, and a good thing it was, as you will hereafter see. I have told you that she was to meet me on the following day.

And a happy man I was that blessed morning. So great was my nervous excitement, that I had the greatest difficulty in shaving myself, and could eat no breakfast, barring half a dozen eggs, a trifle of bacon, and a few cups of tay or coffee, and the like of that ; but the devil a drop of ardent spirits did I taste, and a good thing it was, as following events will shew. Well, I went to the window, and there she was again—dressed—oh ! wasn't she dressed ? All the colours of the rainbow seemed united in her appearance, into every thing that was lovely, genteel, elegant and prepossessing. Well, sure its me that's the boy to rattle off the long words. And there she was again smiling in a way that made me see she was serious in her intentions.

“ It was long till four o'clock came that day, but at last it did arrive. And now this brings me to the most interesting

part of my adventure, which if you please we shall defer until I have smoked another cigar, and drank a few more glasses of wine. By the powers Ned, we must have something *hot* after this."

CHAPTER III.

(THE LADY OVER THE WAY,)

Continued.

“WELL,” resumed Tim, after he had refreshed himself as aforesaid. “I went out just two minutes before four. I had set my watch on purpose, and kept looking at it every five minutes for the previous two hours. I counted the chimneys to make sure of the house, and going round to the street—it was a narrow, shabby-genteel kind of a place—took up a

station at a convenient distance. You can't think how my heart beat just then. The house I was watching, was not just exactly like the buildings in Belgrave Square, but it was three stories high, had a green door and no windows broken—and I was thankful. 'Oh, my darling!' thinks I, 'but if I am only rich enough to get a roof put upon O'Flannagan Hall, and a trifle of furniture to make it of some use keeping out the water, I'll one day see you in a more ancient and aristocratical building than that, any how.' And then I began to calculate the expence of repairs, or faith, rather of creations—when the clock struck four, the green door opened and I felt my heart rise sensibly five inches nearer my mouth. But I should have told you, Ned, that I have always had bad eyes."

"You always end your stories where you ought to have begun, Mr. O'Flannagan."

"Well, well, don't be speaking now—I say

the green door slowly opened, and a lady—the lady, for there was no mistaking the dress—descended to the street. Oh ! murder, murder, murder ! she was lame of a leg ! short, squat, and dumpy, and tried to conceal her lameness as others have done before her by a kind of swagger ! Just fancy a little dumpy woman swaggering along the street to conceal the rockotory motion of a game leg. My blood ran cold, but still I could not believe that this was the phaynix I had seen at the window, and determined to ascertain the point I boldly walked up and looked her full in the face. She blushed and took my arm at once, smiled, shewing a set of front teeth the colour of ripe stilton. Never was man so deceived as I had been. Her hair was red, fiery red, her features might look devilish well at a distance, but a closer inspection made it a toss up whether they, or a full moon, had the greater pretensions to beauty, and to crown all, she leaned on my

arm with a weight which while it shewed great kindness, and affection to me, was highly advantageous to herself in preserving her equilibrium. In fact I saw that I had got into the devil's own scrape, and only wished I might be able to get out of it like a gentleman. I was so confounded at the blunder I had made, that it was some time before I could command my faculties sufficiently to speak, but at length I began to recover my senses, and remarked that it was delightful weather for the potatoes. She answered that it had very much improved the appearance of the chimney pots in our part of the town. "Oh, my darling!" says I, getting bold, for I saw it was best to put a good face upon the matter.

"That is what you will never be able to do," remarked his friend parenthically.

"Now, now, be easy. 'Ah, my darling!' says I, how swate you looked yesterday all over white barring the black scarf."

“ ‘It was not a scarf,’ said she, ‘it was a *scarf*.’ ”

“A whale ! Oh, murder !” said I, ‘how fond you all are of giving extraordinary names to wearing apparel ! I suppose now that invisible curiosity which adds such a gracefulness to the faymale shape, in polite society, is called a Hippopotamus ?’

“She looked mighty big at this, and I began to hope she was going to leave me, but the divil a bit. On we walked, and to my horror and consternation, entered Oxford Street. I felt a cold perspiration on my temples, for I knew our personal appearance would strike the eyes of every body we met, and true it proved that day. “There go a brace of beauties !” cried one. “They have broken out of the Zoological Gardens !” cried another, and an impudent fellow in a fustian jacket had the assurance to come up to us, and touching his hat, said he would give us fifteen pounds a

piece if we would go down together in a caravan, and allow ourselves to be exhibited one afternoon at Greenwich Fair. The rascal took care to take himself off in double quick time, and with the faymale on my arm I was not in a condition to follow him. Never was there an Irish gentleman in such a bother as I was that blessed day. With the natural gallantry of my country—(Oh ! sure it was sore tried that day.) I would not do any thing positively rude, yet I was cudgelling my brains at a good rate to devise some means of escape, for I dreaded going near the Park, in case I should meet any of my acquaintance. At last I hinted I was thirsty—which was God's truth—and hoped I might escape into some tavern.

“ But this only brought new disasters, she said she was the same, and before I knew what I was about, I found myself in a fruit shop. Grapes, pines and peaches, and the Lord knows what, were put before us, of which she

- partook in a manner that shewed she was blessed with a mighty good appetite, although I would not have given a flowry potatoe for a cart load of what I was forcing myself to consume. A wonderful exotic, with a Grake name, in a flowerpot, next took her fancy ; this I was forced to present her with, and she gave her address with instructions to send the plant to her house that evening ; next came another, and another, each at higher prices, for the
- shopman saw my situation and had the barbarity to take advantage of it ; and to crown all, in addition to about a dozen outlandish plants, I was forced to pay for a crystal jar, with gold fish in it.

“ Oh ! it was me that was glad when we got out again, for I began to be afraid she would take a fancy to the whole stock in trade. ‘ Well ! ’ thinks I, ‘ if ever I am thirsty again with you my darling, I will keep it to myself— Nine pounds, eleven shillings and sixpence

gone smack; but just once let me turn my back upon this scrape, and it's a wonder to me if I fall into the like again.'

"We were now once more in the street, but how I was to regain my liberty I could not tell. I took out my watch, as if I had another engagement; tried to yawn, but the depression of my spirits prevented that; and happening just then to come opposite to a watchmaker's shop, I observed that I had lost the key of my watch and would buy one here. So in I rushed, hoping that there might providentially be a back door, through which they would have the humanity to let me pass. I begged her just to wait a moment; but she declined doing that and kept fast to my arm. •

"Well, in we both went, and I had no sooner entered than I saw, to my horror, that as well as a watchmaker's it was a jeweller's shop! Oh! my blood ran cold, for I remembered the infamous vegetables that had cost

me so much ; and I thought it was all over with my personal property now. I was not long 'till I said I was satisfied with a key, but already had a polite, black-whiskered fellow spread before the lady a box or two of rings, chains, bracelets, and all that, and had the impudence to point out half a dozen things which he hinted were admirably adapted for *presents*. What could I do ? My first impulse was to rush out to the street ; but there were other people in the shop, and I could see they were all tittering at my evident perplexity. At last I made her a present of the jewels she seemed to admire so enthusiastically, and to conceal my distress of mind, while the shopman was putting up the things, I turned round, cocked my hat, and whistled ' Saint Patrick's day in the morning !'

" Out we went again, and there was I within twenty yards of the Park. Matters were now desperate, and I was resolved at all hazards.

to make my escape; so I paused a moment, and declared I was so tired I could not move another step. She leaned heavier upon my arm and declared she was in precisely the same predicament. I proposed calling a hackney coach, but she said that to ride in a close carriage always gave her a headache, but we were just opposite a livery stable where they had barouches to let on hire. A long backed, short legged fellow, in a calico shirt, at these words came forward and informed us that there was an open carriage with the horses put to, just ready to be engaged, and before I had well collected my senses I found myself sitting by her side in a kind of open chariot driving towards the entrance to the Park. She said it was a delightful day, and as the Park was full of company we should have a very agreeable drive.

“In we drove, amongst the crowd of carriages, every body staring at us, some laughing

others uttering exclamations and looking at us through their eye glasses, the very grooms and footmen, raising their eye brows in astonishment.

“ But my companion took all this as complimentary, sat erect in the carriage, and gave herself as many airs as if we had been the popular Members for Hyde Park paying a visit to our constituents. She opened her parasol,—shut it again—smiled, laughed, looked arch, and now and then nodded her head, while I sat like a cat in a lantern confused with my situation, and not without apprehensions of something worse. Every minute brought new vexations ; I met and was recognised by the very people I was anxious to avoid, as well as by one or two acquaintances who I thought were in the country.

“ We got entangled with another carriage, which drew us yet more prominently into notice ; and on reaching the bottom of the

principal drive where I thought my troubles would be over, she ordered the coachman to drive up again through the concourse. I was now half dead with shame and confusion ; for, this time, the people made a kind of line to see us as we passed ; but when we got to the top of the drive, I made the fellow who drove us, and who himself did not much like to go down amongst the carriages again, drive round the Park.

“ But I saw that this would only be a temporary relief, for she was already finding fault with the dullness of the path we had chosen, and was urging the coachman to make haste back again. I saw we were again approaching the line of carriages, and looked about me for some convenient spot to leap out upon, and take flight at once, when at that critical moment she dropped her handkerchief, and stooped to pick it up, “ pitch us out !” I whispered to the coachman—into the Serpentine—any way—

and I'll give you a five pound note ! The man shut one eye in token of understanding me, and the next minute I found myself and the lady sprawling on the turf. She got up, and a crowd began to gather ; but I paid the coachman, and telling her that the springs were broken, hurried her out of the Park, called a hackney coach in Piccadilly, and bundling her in, ordered the Jarvey to drive to No. 4. ———, Street, the house where she lived. I shut the door myself, and pretending not to observe her surprised look that I did not also enter the vehicle, raised my hat, and wished her a pleasant afternoon. I then proceeded to the nearest coffee-house, and ordered whisky punch to compose my spirits.

“ It was a day of bad luck, that same I can tell ye, and next morning when I thought the mischief was over, judge of my feelings at receiving a letter signed ‘ Clarinda Higgins,’ four pages closely written, and crossed again

in red ink, hoping that I was not hurt by the fall; and after a great deal of elegant sentimental writing, with here and there a line or two of poetry, informing me that she would be happy to accompany me again that evening! The moment I read that, I went out resolving to keep out of harm's way, and did not return 'till late.

“The next morning there came another, a double sheet and crossed again; and the following morning another, which she had evidently sprinkled with the watering pot to give it the appearance of tears. But I stood upon the defensive, and exhibited the doctrine of passive resistance, for I made a resolution never to answer one of these communications; in fact the reading them was a serious thing, and ran away with half the morning. At last, to put an end to the business, I collected them all together, packed them up, and returned them to her with a polite note, informing her

that as I took in a morning paper it was out of my power to give her letters that necessary attention which the epistles of a lady required, and I hoped therefore she would not give herself the trouble of writing any more.

“ To this I received a thunder and lightning note, telling me that she had a brother in the city, clerk to the house of Twist and Trimmings, the eminent tailors, to whom she had that day written to avenge the injury I had done her. ‘ Oh,’ thinks I, ‘ things are coming now to a state I understand.’

“ I waited at home two days in the expectation of receiving a hostile message from this Hector of the house of Twist and Trimmings ; but no such person made his appearance. However, on the third morning, I saw a young man looking at me from her window through a long telescope. I gave him a full front view, and I presume the gentleman was satisfied, for

I never heard anything more of the matter. But the place brought unpleasant recollections, and I went into new lodgings the following week.

“Now, Ned, pull the bell, and let us have the whisky punch!”



CHAPTER IV.

(THE WIDOW.)

“THAT was an awkward scrape with the lady over the way, friend Tim,” remarked Mr. Rattlebone after they had filled their glasses.

“Oh! the devil’s scrape,” rejoined Tim, mixing his own punch a second time, or rather adding a second quantum of whisky to it, “the devil’s own scrape and gave me a lesson to be careful how I looked at windows again.

I never now see a pretty face at a window without remembering Miss Clarinda Higgins."

"Suppose we drink her health."

"Let it be in solemn silence then, for I'm anxious to change the subject."

"And now, Tim, this was not your only adventure with the fair sex in London, before you fell in with the lovely Heiress."

"And that's true. But by my soul if its adventures you call them, when a man is drowning in a bog, you may call it change of scenery, I respect adventure," said Tim, striking the table, "but this!—Oh, sure now, its wonderful the effect the whisky has. Where was I?"

"In a bog or some such place."

"Then you're not the one to take me out of it any how."

"But you stop short friend Tim. Let the whisky alone for a moment or two, and resume the thread of your discourse."

"Next tumbler I will. The present is sacred to the memory of Miss Clarinda Higgins. Ah! long life to her after all. I bear her no malice. I wonder if the gold fish are still alive."

"You are a good natured fellow, Tim, although I am sorry to say your looks are not just—"

"Now, now, let us defer that subject for the present. May I trouble you to look what o'clock it is."

"I think if you would cut off those hideous whiskers and—"

"I see, I see. Well, I shall now tell you of my adventure—since such you call it with the Widow.—You make your punch too weak, Ned."

"I am quite satisfied, Mr. O'Flannagan, with the potency of the barbarous mixture you are inducing me to drink. Who was the Widow?"

"The relict of his Serene Highness Humphrey Jones, Esquire, the lineal descendant of Hector, King of Wales, of blessed memory; who subjugated the Roman Empire, although the Goths got the credit of it."

"I don't understand."

"A Welsh Widow and be hanged to you! You are as dull as Donnybrook on a fast day. Murder! can't you shew a little sagacity," continued Tim, taking another pull at his tumbler.

"Ah, well, go on."

"A Widow, and a portly one, weighed sixteen stone if she weighed anything, as I had good reason to know. It's plenty of Welch rabbits she must have consumed in her time, for she was a credit to the principality. I only wonder how a barren country, fit only to breed goats and bare boned ponies, could have produced such a faymale Colussus. Oh! it's she that was a stout woman."

"Well, well, Tim, but tell your story in order."

"And with due emphasis, not forgetting the full stops and the marks of interrogation. And do you think that an Irish gentleman is going to allow himself to be—"

"Oh! confound it, Tim, tell your story as long as you are sober. This Widow, how did you become acquainted with her?"

"Without the aid of an introduction I can tell you. I supported her in my arms at what she was pleased to term the most critical moment of her life."

"Ay."

"It's as true as that the Pope is a gentleman. I was leaving Drury Lane Theatre one evening, after a crowded house, when I heard a very loud, but a very bad imitation of a faymale shriek. There was a great press in the lobby and a general cry that a lady had

fainted. I pressed forward and was just in time to catch Mrs. Humphrey Jones in my arms and save her from falling on the ground, the people near her being apprehensive of being crushed by her weight, having with great difficulty left an open space for her. I caught her as I tell you, but the concussion made me stagger back upon the crowd of persons, and create a suppressed groan from the whole assembly. However, I rallied and carried her out of the theatre. The fresh air recovered her at once. I lifted her into her carriage. She looked at me in silent admiration."

"It must have been very dark!"

"I understand the insinuation; but she did not look at my face, but at my broad shoulders and top-boots, no doubt much enhanced by the proof I had given her of my strength of body and kindness of disposition. She looked upon me, I say, in silent admiration, thanked me for

my attention, and handed me her card; I understood the hint, raised my hat, and the carriage drove away.

“ Well, on deliberating the following morning how I was to act, I felt rather embarrassed. My first impression was to consider the matter as one requiring no further attention; but the natural politeness of my nature forbade that; I ought to call, and ascertain if she were anything the worse for her squeeze—it was my shoulder blades that ached with holding her up;—moreover she might have some daughters, and because the mother was corpulent, that was no reason why the rising generation should be the same; so accordingly I called at the abode of the Widow.

“ It was an elegant mansion I can tell you, and had a fine, warm, substantial look. I had dressed myself with much attention, and hired a Hackney coach with a Duke’s coronet on

it. No wonder then I was shown into a handsome apartment, and here I was told Mrs. Humphrey Jones would speedily join me. Having nothing better to do, I cast my eyes round the room to see if I could form any conjecture of the habits of Mrs. Jones. But no, there was a great deal of nationality in every thing, but nothing elegant or refined, or that indicated the presence of daughters. The books that lay on the table were 'The Antiquities of Wales, dedicated by permission to Humphrey Jones, Esquire, and nine dashing *et ceteras* : 'A History of the noble Family of Jones,' with a plate illustrating a single combat between a gentleman of that house and Julius Cæsar; and by my soul Cæsar seemed to have the worst of it. 'The private correspondence of Owen Tudor,' transcribed from original manuscript in the possession of Humphrey Jones, Esquire, the representative of that illus-

trious Prince, with various other family records of a like nature; and over the mantel-piece a glass case enclosing a Cheshire cheese, with a label stating that it had once been the property of his Majesty, Sir Watkin, with an affidavit from the person who had stolen it to that effect. But in the midst of my investigations, Mrs. Humphrey Jones entered with a stately step, as if she were going to be led to execution, dressed in black, with a thick gold chain hanging round her shoulders, and a watch as large as a frying-pan hanging by her side. I arose and bowed, and took my seat beside her on the sofa."

" ' Mr. O'Flannagan,' said she, ' you have saved the life of the widow of an illustrious Prince, who if he were alive to thank you would certainly have done so himself.' "

" ' I have not the smallest doubt of it,' said I.

" ' For he loved me—doated on me,' con-

tinued the widow putting her handkerchief to her eyes.

“ ‘ Well,’ said I soothingly, ‘ there’s no help for death, as the saying is, but marry again.’ ”

“ ‘ Marry !’ cried the Widow with a start, that made the windows rattle. ‘ Where shall I find again a man like Humphrey Jones, Esquire? No, no, my tears must flow for ever for that dear departed—the last of a line of glorious Princes—the only legitimate heir to the British Throne. Alas ! Mr. O’Flanagan, he loved me tenderly, and although the Archbishop of Canterbury *did* make proposals, I never regretted having given my hand to Humphrey Jones, Esquire. And you are so like him,’ said the fat Widow looking pathetically upon me, ‘ so very like him. Dear me I feel quite agitated.’ ”

“ I was under some apprehension lest she

should take it into her head to faint again; and remembering the immense power required to keep her in a perpendicular position, I was rather alarmed, but she appeared to revive, and enquired with great urbanity if *I* had suffered anything from the agitating situation in which I had been placed on the preceding evening? I assured her that my delight at perceiving that *she* had suffered nothing from it, would cure me of St. Vitus' dance if I had it. But to make a long story short, I sat with her an hour and a half, and was invited to dine with her next day, to meet a whole host of Jones', Davies, William's and heaven knows what other names. This I did, and an excellent dinner we had. I drank with the Welchmen until they saw stars and sang songs like the book of Chronicles, and pledged me and my country in bumpers that might have satisfied Owen Tudor himself had he been alive to witness it,

and a fortunate thing it was for the British Government that he was dead, otherwise they certainly would have put him on the throne, and given Mrs. Humphrey Jones a handsome pension, not to mention an embargo on Spanish onions, which one of them hiccupped about the propriety of imposing.

“ I won the hearts of these ancient Britons by the zealous and unflinching manner in which I performed my duty to the bottle, and on re-entering the drawing-room they declared to Mrs. Humphrey Jones that I was an honor to my country, and they strongly suspected that Owen Tudor, who was a divil in his day, had gone over one afternoon to drink tay with a faymale ancestor of mine. I pocketed the insinuation against the family virtue of the O’Flannagans because it was kindly meant, and moreover because I knew well enough that had Owen Tudor showed his nose at O’Flan-

nagan Castle he would have been chopped into parrot's meat.

“On the whole the evening passed away agreeably enough, and the result was, that I became on exceedingly good terms with the Widow, and a frequent visitor at the house. By and bye, this acquaintance became a general theme of conversation among my friends, and as she was known to be rich, I found that I had insensibly become a person of considerable importance. Upholsterers, cabinet-makers, and coach-makers, sent me printed lists of their prices, with a request that I would honor them with an order; the Secretary to the Treasury and the whipper-in of the Opposition courted my acquaintance, and requested my interest for the rival candidates, for the Widow's county. Welch attornies wrote me to be appointed Under Sheriffs, Coroners and Clerks of the Peace; and in short on all hands I was

hailed as the happy man who had won the affections of one of the richest widows in the principality. I did not know what to make of all this, for I had hardly myself given the matter a serious consideration, but finding that every body thought me fortunate, I resolved to think myself so, and continued my attentions to the illustrious gentlewoman with vigour.

“ I wore nothing but top boots and buckskins, for she told me she had a passion for them. I dined with her regularly every Sunday, and by special invitation every other day in the week. I began to get fond of Welch ale and toasted cheese—but never could stomach the leeks, and I knocked down a butcher’s boy for singing “ Taffy was a Welchman, Taffy was a thief,” on Saint David’s day.

“ For the whole of that winter and following summer, I was looked upon as the perspective possessor of the Widow’s domains, and when in

autumn she went down to Jones' Hall, I received an invitation to follow her without loss of time. But here was an end to my propitious fortunes. The ill-luck that hangs over the house of O'Flannagan like the curse of Cromwell now begged leave to interfere. I lost the Widow by as provoking a mistake as ever was committed since the fall of man. Let me just make another tumbler, while I again breath, and collect my ideas."

"And now," resumed Tim, smacking his lips, "I must tell you, that the Widow the year before had had a dispute with the surveyor of taxes, and in revenge had ordered every window in her house to be built up with bricks, so that summer and winter, mid-day, and mid-night, it was only candles they had to see with there. Of this circumstance I was entirely ignorant, I arrived in the evening just in time for dinner, and saw nothing unusual in the use of candles.

We had a very pleasant party, a very excellent dinner, and very excellent drink after it. I retired to rest about my usual hour, and wakened in the morning as I thought about the usual time, but finding it was still dark, I went to sleep again. Well, I wakened once more, but it was still dark ;—I could not sleep again, I thought I was bewitched, and lay anxiously waiting for day-light. But the devil a day-light came there, and at last wearied out of all patience I arose and rang the bell. Lights and shaving water were instantly brought, I dressed and went out. By this time it was dark, out side as well as indoors, and a good deal startled and surprised I went back to my room and waited until I was summoned to dinner, which was in a few minutes afterwards. I was much depressed in spirits, for I remembered the stories I had used to hear about the Welch Magicians ; while the Widow looked very cross,

for I had appointed to walk with her round the grounds that forenoon, and of course had not done so.

“Well, the evening passed away and I retired to bed again, not without secret apprehensions of having a visit from the devil before morning. However I slept well enough, and this time got up as soon as I wakened. I rang again for lights, dressed, and the Widow being cross, I breakfasted alone.

“I then went back to my room again, for I thought there was no use in going out in the dark. This day at dinner the Widow was crosser than ever, and no sooner was I again in my room, than I began to think seriously of my predicament, and resolved to leave a country that had no daylight in it.

“Where is the use, thought I, of an estate if you can never see it—who but an evil spirit would think of following hounds in the dark,

or who the devil would care for shooting game with lanterns? No, no, I must get upon Christian ground again, and the Widow may give her hand to Owen Tudor's ghost if she likes. Accordingly next morning I took my leave, and after a cold parting sallied forth to the post-chaise. Never shall I forget my surprise at seeing the light of the sun when I went beyond the door. I thought it was a miracle to congratulate me on my escape from the snares and perils of witchcraft; and hardly knowing if I were walking on my feet or my head I entered the post-chaise, and soon was out of sight of the Widow's domains. A few weeks after my arrival in London, I read an account in the newspaper of her marriage with one of the gentlemen who was such a stickler for the rights of Owen Tudor; and then, and not till then did I learn accidentally the true nature of the mistake I had fallen into. I was

like to have eaten my finger points with vexation, but a circumstance soon occurred which occupied my thoughts in another way—this was no less than my acquaintance with—but before I say another word I must finish my tumbler.

CHAPTER V.

THE HEIRESS.

“It is about three months ago,” resumed Tim, throwing back his coat collar, and stretching out his legs, “since Sir Harry O’Reilly, the High Sheriff of our County, came to London; and a few days after his arrival he did me the honor to ask me to dinner—an invitation which I gratified him by accepting. It was a grand dinner party let me tell you, and I can

assure you, it was not without misgivings that I attended it, for although I flatter myself, that I can go through the manual of forms and ceremonies pretty decently well at a Squire's family party, where there are no side looks like votes of censure from fops and London lacqueys to interfere with the harmony of your thoughts and actions. I never present myself before a dress party here, without fear and trembling—for Ned, although you are impudent by nature, I am endowed in an eminent degree with that modesty which is the inseparable characteristic of merit."

"What, Tim, you are not going to preach!"

"Not until I can get a more respectable audience," said Tim, pulling up his shirt collar.

"But to continue—it was careful the shaving I gave myself that day—I did my best to heighten my personal attractions, and to subdue those little defects which you, Ned, as my friend so sensitively feel—hem!—I dressed with great

attention, and—a thing I never did before—had my hair roasted alive with curling-irons, and my whiskers tortured into an expression of ferocity, that might have kept Ireland quiet for twelve months to come. At length I was ready for action, and after taking a glass of whisky to keep up my spirits, drove to Sir Harry's mansion in a hackney coach. The old Baronet received me with open arms, for he had an intention of standing for the county next election, and introduced me to a whole drawing-room full of fashionably dressed men, and a sprinkling of highly perfumed ladies, with beautiful earrings and white pocket handkerchiefs—for that was all that in the confusion of the moment I had time to observe.—It was dangerous work speaking there, I can tell you, for although every body appeared to be at home, it was impossible not to perceive that every body was painfully sensible that this was not the case; and for my

own part I would have given anything to have been invisible until dinner was served, for I could see that the whole party relieved themselves of looking at each other by looking at me. One long, thin legged fellow in particular had the audacity to raise his eye-glass, as if the startling appearance of my looks justified such an act of barbarity, and if Sir Harry had not just at that moment made some remark about the Catholic Emancipation Bill, I verily believe I should have brought matters to a short issue with the gentleman with the eye glass, by giving him as beautiful a pair of black eyes as ever were seen on this side the Irish Channel.

“ At last, after a few more guests had made their appearance, the grateful sound of the dinner bell produced the usual fluttering effect, and we all marched into the dining room like a regiment of undertakers. There was some difficulty for a moment about the places, for

the ladies were disposed to be very particular, and some gentlemen to be so very polite that one would think certain chairs had hot cinders under the cushions, from the modest reluctance exhibited to occupy them ; and I can honestly assure you, Ned, I ate my plate of soup in such a confusion that I did not know if it were soup, fish or game I was consuming. However, a glass of wine with a bald headed old gentleman with a red nose, who sat next to me, recalled my scattered senses, and I requested a puppy with overbearing mustachios, on the other side of the table, in a bold energetic tone ‘ to pass the potatoes.’ It was little of them there was—and I could not help wondering how Sir Harry, himself an Irishman, had been so fatally inattentive to that delicious vegetable.

“ It was now that for the first time I had the presence of mind to cast my eyes round me, and observe who they were I was dining

with, for from the moment that I had entered the house until now, I had been so bothered with one thing or another, that they might have been Turks and Pagans—barring Sir Harry himself, and the inquisitor with the eye-glass—without me knowing anything at all about it. Judge then of my surprise to find that I was sitting opposite one of the most beautiful and evangelical looking creatures that ever blew her nose in this wicked world. She appeared to be about one and twenty; but no matter what her age was, it was easy to see she was in the prime of youth and loveliness. Her hair was as black as the devil's great-coat, but as soft as silk; her eyes, wild, laughing and dancing, and dark like her hair; while her neck, her brow, and delicate little hands were so white that you might have bleached linen with the very reflection of them. Oh! she looked bewitching Ned. Never did I feel so much my own want of invincible attractions,

that I might be able to make some impression upon her affection ; and the dear creature appeared fond of potatoes too, which alone would have given her an interest in my eyes.

“ She had been looking at me when our glances met, but I could easily see it was more in curiosity than admiration ; yet there could be no mistaking the expression of my countenance when I gazed upon her. Salmon, a fish I am very fond of—lamb, a thing I have a great affection for—turkey, goose, and other poultry (I was always fond of poultry) passed by me unheeded—I was so taken up with the black eyed beauty opposite. Oh ! thinks I, there can be no mistake here—no second Miss Clarinda Higgins’s affair—all is palpable and above board—and I assure you Ned it was her own look of surprise that I was not eating anything, that put me in mind that I was at dinner, and I had just time to stick my fork into a partridge and eat up bones and all when

the last vestige of the dinner disappeared, at least the substantial part of it, as far as eating is concerned. I was distressed to see the puppy with the mustachios, who I afterwards learned was the Honourable and Reverend Phillip Augustus Tabletalk—paying his marked attention. The ladies soon retired, and Sir Harry, I could see, was divilish well pleased to see them depart—and we drew closer round as beautiful an array of wine decanters as the heart of an Irish gentleman could wish. Yet some how or other I felt mighty dull; politics, war, women, and the slave trade were discussed, but I had no participation in what was going on, my mind was wholly engrossed with the lovely creature who had sat opposite me at dinner. I learned from the bald gentleman that she was a Miss Stanley, a wealthy heiress, of whom Sir Harry was the guardian—but this only made me more melancholy than ever,

for it increased the improbability that I should ever get into favor.

“ On rejoining the ladies, I ventured—for I had drank a good deal of excellent Madeira—to get near the heiress, and during the evening she occasionally had the condescension to converse with me ; but it was as a fine lady will sometimes pat the head of a great Newfoundland dog, not from any sympathy between them, but a sort of pleasure in being kind to a wild beast.

“ However God knows I was truly grateful for it, and in spite of my brogue and uncouth appearance, I could see that the Honourable and Reverend Phillip Augustus Tabletalk looked upon me with no good will, and seemed to consider me as an intruder. In addition to him, there was a Captain Dash, of the Life Guards ; and a Lord Milldew, of a very ancient family, but poor like myself, who I could see

were paying court to the heiress ; the whole three were mighty fine fellows, with well made clothes, white hands and signet rings. It seemed to be a forlorn hope on my part to beat down or distance such rivals. Not but that had it come to blows, or even had they had recourse to the marking irons—that I would not willingly, and with confidence have fought them all *seriatim*—if you know the meaning of that word—but here it was all talk—pert expressions and what they call *repartay*—while the moment I would open my mouth, I could see them all raise their eye-brows, as if they expected to hear a bull.

“ But its a long day that has no ending—and at length we departed from Sir Harry’s hospitable mansion. I could see the heiress lived there, with Lady O’Reilly and her daughters. It was me that was a favorite with them, for I had once saved the eldest one’s life, when a young horse she would always ride

because it had a long tail, threw her into the river—and I was on excellent terms with the other two, for when they were children I had used to let them ride upon my back, and hold them up to steal cherries, besides other agreeable reminiscences which made me sure of a good word from the dear little divils if occasion required.

“This emboldened me to take leave of Miss Stanley with as much respectful particularity as I was able to command ; and I contrived to have occasion to visit Sir Harry the following day about county matters. You need hardly be told that I did not forget to do that, and after a little manœuvring, I managed to get into the presence of the young ladies again. You can’t think how glad they were to see me. I mean the Miss O’Reilly’s, and I verily believe if it had not been for Miss Stanley they would have had a romp with me in the ~~old~~ fashion. They told me about old Ireland—the dear

creatures had a spice of the brogue themselves—of the neighbouring families—ay even of the old servants—they then turned to Miss Stanley and told her how many steeple chaces I had rode—of the leaps I had taken—exaggerating them of course—and what a dear good-natured soul I was ; and to crown all, the youngest of them, went up to the heiress and asked in a whisper, if she was too old now to kiss me. She laughed, and blood and ouns ! I heard the expression and kissed them all round, ay, the heiress herself ! but no sooner had I done so, than I turned deadly pale, for I felt I had committed such a blunder as only an Irishman would have done. The dark eyes sparkled angrily at me, and there was a blush upon the soft cheek—but when she saw the real distress I was in, her anger abated, and she thought it best to laugh with the rest. Oh ! the Honourable and Reverend Phillip Augustus Tabletalk, be hanged ! thinks I, if matters go on at this rate

I'll beat you blind, with Lord Milldew and Captain Dash, at your back—and sure it was me that progressed after that. I visited Sir Harry often, and frequently met my rivals there. I accompanied Lady O'Reilly and the ladies to the Opera, and there sure we would find the Honourable and Reverend Phillip Augustus Tabletalk, and his two friends, for never did rivals seem to be on such good terms before—and I could see they regarded me as a common enemy whom it was necessary to dispose of before they cast lots among themselves for the prize.

“They even had the assurance one day to give an execrable imitation of my brogue, a thing which turned the hearts of the young Miss O'Reillys against them, for they viewed it as a national insult and took it up accordingly. I thought of challenging all the three, but on consulting with my friends they told me it was a matter which it would be ridi-

culous to take it up in a hostile manner, so I was obliged to pocket the affront, with no other consolation than the reflection that they had injured themselves by it.

“Bye and by, the heiress became attached to my company. She would enter the room with a smile when I was present, hold out her hand with a blush, and however large the party, in spite of fine looks, epaulets, and all that, she would take my arm willingly, and if possible sit by my side in some quiet corner, and converse with me about Ireland.

“All these symptoms of acquiescence were not lost upon me, and the result was that I offered her my hand, and in spite of Sir Harry’s surprised and angry interference—my own dark eyed girl has the spirit of Julius Cæsar—I was, and am accepted; TheAccepted,” continued Tim, raising his tumbler—“yes, ‘the accepted,’ and happy and successful admirer, suitor and lover of the charming Lucy Stanley.

Now I must confess Ned, that although all this was very gratifying, it certainly did surprise me. There was no shutting my eyes to my disadvantages of countenance, nor to the superiority in that respect which my rivals had over me. So one day I asked Lucy—I call her Lucy now, and she calls me Tim, how it came that I had distanced all my rivals. She answered, ‘because from the first I saw you were generous and manly hearted—because one cold wintry evening, where you had no idea of seeing me, I saw you, dear Tim, take off your great coat and give it to a poor old Irishman, that was shivering in the street—because every body spoke so well of you—because I saw you had a noble and gallant soul, and because I was sure, oh! I was always sure you loved me!’ I clasped her in my arms and if there was a tear or two between us they were not bitter ones.

“Next week, Ned, we shall be united, and

then my boy look out for a pair of white gloves, and good shooting next season at StanleyCourt. Oh! won't we be happy! Come Ned, let us finish the evening with another tumbler. Egad I am in spirits now, and if it will afford you any gratification, you may call me as ugly as the Duke of York's Monument—Oh! blood and ouns! you are asleep.

CHRONICLE SECOND.

PASSION.

PASSION.

CHAPTER I.

"Man's love is of man's life a thing apart
'Tis woman's sole existence."

BYRON,

CLARA ELPHINSTONE at the age of three and thirty was one of the most beautiful wives in London.

She might have sat for the picture of a Juno; —her face was animated and intellectual, and her figure, in the full proportions of womanhood,

perfect. Her step might have been first in a "regal hall," and her proud white brow would have added lustre to a diadem.

Her husband was a wealthy merchant, a man not much older than herself, but in character infinitely more impressed with the signet of age. She had one child, a daughter, in her fourteenth year; at this period of our tale absent from home—at school. Mr. Elphingstone early in life had received benefits from a gentleman of the name of Herbert, a Banker in London, with whom in latter years he had lived on terms of great intimacy and friendship. The banker died, and contrary to the expectations of every one, died poor.

But by none was this reverse so severely felt as by his only son, a young man in his twentieth year, then studying at one of the Universities. He found himself without fortune or profession, accustomed to prosperity, and having lived until now under the unquestioned

impression of being the heir to a large fortune. He was become an orphan and an outcast, for creditors seized even upon his father's house, and Henry Herbert saw himself removed from affluence to a state approaching to poverty.

But a friend still remained ; Elphingstone no sooner heard how matters stood than he sent for the young man, spoke to him with the freedom of friendship, told him of the impossibility now of realizing the hopes he had been accustomed to indulge—represented to him the necessity of embracing such opportunities of exertion, as circumstances might still have left him to preserve his independence ; and concluded by offering him an asylum in his house, until his father's affairs were arranged ; and such employment in his counting-house as would at least procure him an income now, and be of the ulterior advantage of fitting him out for commerce.

These offers young Herbert willingly accepted, and on the following day took up his abode in the merchant's house. His father's recent death, and his own sudden change of fortune, gave a melancholy to his manners which Mrs. Elphingstone, who as well as her husband sympathised sincerely in their young friend's sorrow, strove by every means to dispel. She took an interest in him which only woman can bestow on suffering; a gentle kindness whose very accents are grateful to the bruised heart.

By degrees Henry Herbert became more reconciled to his condition, and more and more attached to the society of his lovely hostess.

It was a dangerous situation for both. There was a sympathy between the minds and character of each. Mrs. Elphingstone was accomplished beyond the usual acquirements of her sex; and possessed a fervour of imagination and feeling which had the highest charms to a young man of Herbert's nature, particularly

when met with in a woman and a lovely one. Nay more, she possessed endowments which no education can confer—an exquisite sense of the beautiful in art and nature, an enlarged knowledge of life, and the feelings and passions which govern its vicissitudes, tinctured with a dash of enthusiasm which heightened every mental grace. And Herbert was at an age when such sentiments are met with more welcome communion than the cold philosophy of the world ;—at an age when life shows in perspective its sunniest visions, and the mind revels in its own dreamy palaces, which become, as it were, realities when another follows in its wandering, and calls forth the half formed thought to give it sympathy.

Months ran on, and Herbert's brow grew brighter ; the gloom which used to hang upon his manner cleared away, and his natural buoyancy of spirits returned. He was now no longer reserved towards those who formed the

convivial circle of Mr. Elphingstone; on the contrary, he played his part cheerfully and pleasingly, and became a general favorite with all.

His education had not been so wholly that of the cloisters as to contract his general information on passing topics; on the contrary, it was superior to the generality of those of his years, while his cultivated mind enhanced the modesty, yet willingness with which he spoke on such topics as usually formed the theme of conversation at the merchant's table. In the counting-house also he became an acquisition; his activity, diligence and gentlemanly bearing having already assigned him a station there as satisfactory to himself, as pleasing to his father's friend.

It was the summer holidays, and young Emily Elphingstone returned from school. She was a quiet, gentle girl, shy as her years and education might be supposed to render her;—and it was some time ere she felt quite at her ease

with the new inmate of her father's house. By and bye however she became so, and Herbert found himself as great a favorite with her, as he was with the rest of the family.

One evening an excursion to Richmond was proposed. Mr. Elphingstone had a sister living there, a Mrs. Osborne, a person of property, whose god-daughter Emily was. He declined accompanying them, owing to his engagements in the city, but requested young Herbert to do so in his place. Herbert readily consented, and so the matter was arranged.

Next morning Mrs. Elphingstone, Emily and Herbert set out together. It was a bright June day, the carriage moved over the smooth dry road, the sky was calm and clear, and even Emily forgot her usual reserve in the flow of spirits which the day, the scenery, and the school-girl love of a holiday produced.

Mrs. Elphingstone was cheerful, and Herbert

forgot all his sorrows in glad participation in the genial spirit of the little party.

“What a beautiful house!” exclaimed Emily pointing to a handsome mansion at some distance from the road. “Now that’s the sort of house I shall have when I am married.”

Her companions laughed.

“And do you imagine you will have all the things you can wish for when you are a wife, Emily?” enquired her mother.

“Of course. I am sure I cannot have them now.”

“You expect to be happier then, when you are married than you are now?” continued Mrs. Elphingstone.

“Indeed I do, I am not happy now at all,” said the little beauty pensively.

“And in what are you unhappy?” enquired her mother.

“Oh! in everything. Am I not obliged to

go to school—to learn lessons—to be confined and restrained in every way. I should like to be free!” continued the girl looking out upon the beautiful scenery that now lay around them.

“And are you too of Emily’s opinion?” enquired Mrs. Elphingstone turning her fine eyes towards Herbert.

“In one sense I am. I cannot help looking forward to the married state as a period of increased happiness. I have a whole host of authorities on my side.”

“I believe,” remarked the other, “those most susceptible of happiness in the married state, are those who never find it there.”

“I should hope that was an error,” said Herbert smiling, “where it but for the sake of those whose character of mind gives them capacities not only for enjoying happiness in an eminent degree, but also of conferring it.”

“And yet it is rarely so.”

•

“ I should still hope you were wrong,” rejoined Herbert, “ for otherwise I must consider all my married friends either as really unhappy, or unworthy of enjoying happiness. It would seem, if such a doctrine were correct, that none but fools are happy in the married state.”

“ Truth is ever found between extremes,” replied Mrs. Elphingstone, “ but sayings have passed into proverbs, which have had less truth to recommend them than the remark you smile at. A celebrated modern author has said that people of imagination, of a refined, or if I must call it so, of a poetical temperament are rarely, nay are *never* happy in wedlock. Now if our Poets, if people full of those sentiments and feelings the very expression of which please and endear, if they who possess those sympathies eminently which give not only society but human nature itself, its amenity, are miserable in this condition, does it not follow (you

•

see I can be logical without the aid of a university,) that they who are most insensible to such qualities of mind will be most sensible of happiness."

"But I am far," rejoined Herbert "from admitting the truth of that writer's remark, which he applies to a case of the most heartless coxcombry on modern record. I am far from erecting the author you allude to into an oracle in such a case. Look at Martial, the Latin poet, some of whose best poems were written to his wife *after* marriage—to Hogg, one of the best husbands and fathers in moral Scotland, to Walter Scott, to——"

"Oh! pray, pray do not cite cases," said Mrs. Elphinstone smiling languidly, "I could cite one which has more weight with me than a thousand biographies."

The eyes of the lady and those of Herbert met. A blush, slight, but recognised by both, rose to the cheek of each, and at that moment

the carriage, which had approached the house unperceived by the speakers, drew up before Mrs. Osborne's gate.

She came across the garden to meet them—kissed Emily, shook hands warmly with her sister-in-law and welcomed them all cordially.

They followed her into her cottage parlour. It was a snug and pretty one, and commanded a beautiful view of the sweet scenery of Richmond.

There was the chintz covered sofa, the long windows opening to the garden, the book-case—the flower vases, the portraits on the walls, the shining fire-place, and all the usual appearances of a rural abode. And the hostess herself was in perfect keeping with the abode. She was older than her brother, and possessed that plain kindness of manner, so pleasing in mellow age. She shewed her visitors over her miniature grounds, pointed out the choice flowers

she had collected, shewed Emily those she had planted the previous year, and others to which, from their beauty, she had given the name of the gratified girl.

It was a sweet place. The green hills rose around it rich with sunny verdure ; the smooth Thames glittered between ; trees, flowery slopes and beautiful villas studded the distance, and the garden in which they walked was a picture of its kind. It led also to more extended grounds and a shady walk by the river side.

The hours passed quickly away, Emily was in high glee ; to her this visit to the cottage was an oasis in the desert routine of her life, and her aunt another name for the memory of a thousand grateful acts.

After dinner, as the afternoon was beautiful, they again strolled out. Emily clung to her aunt's arm, Mrs. Elphinstone took Herbert's. They walked to the river side. The sun shone mellow through the trees, the smooth stream

glided silently on ; there was a gentle peacefulness in the hour that fitted it for the sweetest dreams of fancy.

It has been remarked by a clever writer, " I wish not to live for fame and honours, I would be content to live—to *think*." And could the interchange of thought between two minds richly endowed and finely tempered by nature's most lavish hand, could two such souls dream life away together ;—methinks the loss of Eden beyond the loss of that higher communion which it has deprived us of, and the immortality which although deferred is still the birthright of intelligence—methinks that beyond these, the loss of which is lessened by having been never known, Paradise itself would be rivalled by our doom.

But it is not so. The mind, like the body, has its re-action, and in that painful void clings to the record of forbidden thoughts which perhaps the halo of Pleasure's hour disguised. Then it

is that the mask which concealed the charm is withdrawn, that the tendencies which allured assume a form which virtue startles at, when the undefined pleasure has passed away, and though sinless, has left a sting !

The evening approached, and the sky, which during the day had been pure and heavenly, began to threaten a summer storm. The party returned to the cottage, tea was hastily served, the carriage brought to the door, and the little party took leave of their kind hostess.

As they proceeded towards town the sky became more threatening. Large drops of rain fell occasionally, the clouds grew dark and livid, and Emily, who had a horror of a thunder-storm, crept closer to her mother's side. It seemed however as if they had escaped it, for they approached the outskirts of London without seeing anything beyond its signs. But then it burst upon them. The lightning glared in fierce flashes as if it had only waited for

partial darkness to expose its terrors; the thunder swelled in loud peals and crumbled as it were into lazy echoes; while the rain burst upon them in torrents.

Herbert called to the coachman to drive fast, as the open carriage in which they sat left them unprotected. His order was startlingly obeyed. A flash that seemed to have burst from the earth, rather than to have descended from the sky, glared almost before the horses' faces, followed by a startling peal. Emily shrieked, the horses madly plunged and darted off at a furious pace. The coachman became paralyzed; the city lamps which they flew past, streamed as it were before their eyes in one continuous line of light; they heard cries of alarm for their safety in the street—their eyes grew dim—still the horses dashed madly on, and the panic stricken coachman, heedless of the reins, clung to the driving box. Each second threatened destruction.

Herbert was the first to regain his presence of mind. A glance shewed him the extremity they were in, and the helplessness of him who drove them ; suddenly rising up, and grasping him by the collar, he seized the reins, pulled him backwards into the carriage, and scrambled into his place. Mrs. Elphingstone clasped her hands, and for the first time seemed aware of the dreadful jeopardy of her situation.

They continued to dash on over the rattling, splashing streets ;—they were approaching the more crowded parts of the town—the horses, maddened and frightened even at their own career, became more unmanageable, and every instant threatened to dash the carriage to pieces. Herbert saw this, and with a bold eye and steady hand turned the infuriated animals right and hard against a wall, the gable of a house that formed the corner of a leading thoroughfare.

The horses recoiled with the shock, the pole was shivered, Herbert was thrown from the seat, but the danger to the occupants of the carriage was over ! He was lifted up insensible ; they were not twenty yards from home ; and Mrs. Elphingstone, in a state of agitation bordering on frenzy, accompanied by her daughter, followed the stunned youth into her husband's dwelling.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT would man's sick bed be without woman's ministering? A type of the grave, nay the grave would be preferable, for the low damp walls of that narrow bed if they impart no sympathy, receive a guest who needs it not. But the sick bed—that scene of more than infant feebleness of mind and body, that humbling picture of proud manhood's weakness,

those long, long hours when father, brother, the dearest friend forsake him ; or if they come to console, do it in those measured, hacknied terms which the vexed spirit frets at ; those bright sunny days when the cheerfulness of Nature mocks his helplessness, and those quiet summer evenings when the very stillness becomes oppressive to the weary sufferer—those child-like moans which are soothed and pitied, that restless peevishness which is borne with, and by gentle kindness blunted and allayed ; how melancholy would be such scenes, how wretched those heavy hours, how acute those sufferings, and what a sad sight would the sick bed of the strongest-minded be, without the tender assiduity of woman !

Henry Herbert had sustained a severe injury ; his collar bone was fractured, and for some time he was pronounced by his medical attendants to be in imminent danger. His illness was long—long enough to prostrate the

active powers of his mind by weakness and suffering. Health returned at last, but its steps were slow, and even when he was able to leave his room, it was with the tottering limbs and drooping spirits of an invalid.

But never had a sick couch a more faithful attendant than Mrs. Elphingstone ; who feeling that the accident which had endangered his life, had saved those of her daughter and herself, was unremitting in her efforts to assuage his sufferings ; and even when he was able to rejoin the family circle, she still in some degree continued the attentions which were now as grateful to convalescence as they had been to suffering.

But from such attention an interest was created between the bestower and the recipient which had not—at least in so eminent a degree existed before. It was not in the human heart, far less was it in the generous and fervent one of Henry Herbert to be unmoved by sentiments which went

beyond the name of gratitude, for kindness enduring and unwearied, for solace and sympathy, for communion of mind that met his own, for tenderness, aye, for very love to him almost an outcast and a stranger. For Clara Elphingstone although she disguised it from herself loved young Herbert with a passion such as only a heart naturally virtuous can feel when it has overstepped in errant thoughts, the sacred pale which ought to bound them. Yet she knew it not, or rather she would not confess it to herself. She was still able to put a good construction upon the sentiments she cherished, to disguise the emotions which secretly swayed her, and to blind herself to the object towards which she gave her feelings the rein.

But she loved!—Youth still mantled in her veins, and its sweet memories lingered in her heart. The bleak view of age that hung like a shadow over the staid duties of her future life,

made her shrink from contemplating them. The head has been said to be the dupe of the heart, and it is most true that there is a nameless season of life, when the heart if not chastened aright would be more content to bear the odium of the follies or sins of youth, than assume the dull mantle of age and wisdom. It is a truth which only they who fully know can in all circumstances fully guard against ; a dangerous and a delicate resolvent of the mystic windings of the reason, the feelings and the will—an era not more of time than of circumstance, a juncture that tries the temper of woman's virtue and woman's pride, more than all the overt acts which scandal has blazoned or malice chronicled.

Of keen feelings, and a nature whose bias was so pure that it dreaded not itself, Mrs. Elphinstone as blindly as willingly, cherished, obeyed and at last became the slave of the secret passion which had settled in her heart. And

still she disguised it from herself. Friendship, that idle word, and Gratitude that classic term, for the moderns know it not,—were the thin disguises in which she wrapped the emotions which governed her ;—and pride and weakness, for they blended here, prevented her from tearing aside the veil and scrutinizing them aright.

And Herbert could not longer shut his eyes to the nature of the feelings with which he was regarded, and the secret bent which his own had taken in exchange. The continual society of a beautiful and fascinating woman, the unrestrained companionship, the freedom of word and thought, and the insight into character which was given and reciprocated ; the knowledge what each would think, how each would feel at any passage either of fiction or regarding events which conversation communicated, the interest which this very knowledge created, the unbidden communion which

under those circumstances a single look would create, the gratitude for affectionate assiduities, for *affection* was now the proper word, the sympathy and solace which those attentions had afforded ; and then the beautiful being who bestowed them—the accomplished mind which held sweet converse with his own, the warm proud heart that secretly loved him, the soft passionate eyes that in hours of agony had turned tearfully towards his—the beautiful hand that had bathed his fevered brow, these and a host of other memories were fast making his stoicism totter, and honor itself become sluggish on its guard.

But Herbert *did* see at last the precipice upon which he stood ; he saw the goal towards which both were blindly hastening, the ingratitude, the dishonour, the outrage to the sacred rights of hospitality, or even more sacred still, the duty which he owed to the generous man, who had taken him by the

hand when all the world forsook him ; he pictured too the injury which he was passively suffering the warm-hearted being to draw upon herself, the wrongs too which her innocent child might have to curse her for—he saw all this, and with difficulty brought himself to adopt the only course which honour, duty, and the stern obligation of integrity pointed out. It was to continue no longer an inmate of Mr. Elphingstone's house.

But all this was not the work of a short period. Herbert had been two years residing with his benefactor ere he saw in its true light the real condition in which he stood. In that time he had become as it were a member of the family ; his society had become more and more gratifying to Mr. Elphingstone as well as to his wife ; he was a trusty counsellor, and a sincere friend—the merchant had gradually taken him into his highest confidence, and Henry Herbert

by his abilities and character had amply repaid the favours he had received.

It would be an unexpected disclosure to intimate his resolution of changing his abode, but Herbert was firm and manly in all his purposes and the course he had resolved upon was one from which he felt no persuasion should induce him to turn aside.

He determined first to break the matter to his benefactress. And it was in this that he anticipated the greatest difficulty. He dreaded the quick glance of those intelligent eyes—he dreaded that if not in words, by construction, his real object would not be disguised.

And Herbert guessed right. He sought an opportunity of finding her alone. This was not long wanting. It was an hour that a poet might have chosen ; it was summer, and the evening of a sabbath day. The quiet square in which they lived was forsaken, the sun had not set. Mrs. Elphinstone sat in her large drawing-

room reclining near one of the windows. Her husband had gone out. Herbert entered the room. She smiled languidly—pointed to a chair near her, and although they had parted but an hour before at the dinner table, she held out her hand to welcome him. The book she had been reading lay open on her knee, it was one of Herbert's favourites—and he saw at a glance she had been reading a passage which yesterday he had carelessly observed had pleased him. There was a look of quiet pleasure on her eloquent features too, at his having come to sit with her there, and Herbert in spite of all his resolves became uneasy and even embarrassed at the task he had assigned himself.

“I am glad I have found you alone,” at length said he, “I wish to tell you before I acquaint Mr. Elphinstone with it, that I have taken lodgings nearer to the counting-house, and that in future it is my intention to reside there.”

“Taken lodgings,” exclaimed Mrs. Elphingstone in a tone of surprise.

“I have mentioned it awkwardly and abruptly,” said Herbert, “but I cannot express how deeply I feel the debt of gratitude, which I owe both to Mr. Elphingstone and yourself. Pardon my present embarrassment, but—but—if you knew, continued he fervently—if you could only read my heart, you would—would—”

“You surprise me, Herbert,” said the lady, shewing by her looks that she was sincere in what she said—“what has occasioned this sudden desertion?”

“Do not call it that,” replied the other with some emotion. “God is my witness, the happiest days of my life have been passed under your roof.”

“Then why leave it, Herbert?”

“I shall be nearer the counting-house,” stammered he.

“Mr. Elphingstone’s cab you know is at your

service," rejoined the lady, " and it was only last week that he told you, you might take more leisure than you had hitherto allowed yourself."

" I must not encroach more upon your kind hospitality," said the other in the same embarrassed manner.

" Herbert, Herbert, you know your society is never an encroachment here. My husband prefers it to that of many of his oldest friends—and I," continued the lady turning her soft eyes upon him, " do you think Henry, that I am wearied with it?"

" No, no ;—I—I—do not mean that—yet I think—nay," said Herbert firmly. " I am resolved to trespass no longer on—"

" Trespass !" cried the other with angry reproach.

" How am I to express ? Here I cannot—I *dare* not remain !" said Herbert with sudden vehemence.

The film seemed suddenly to have dropped from his listener's eyes—she blushed deeply—and her lip for a moment quivered with the workings of secret passion.

“Herbert,” said she after a moment's pause while the flush on her cheek had been followed by sudden paleness, although her bright eyes still sparkled with angry lustre, “it might be wrong in me to ask you to explain the strange word you have used, but it would be equally wrong to ask for further explanations of motives which it is evident you disguise;—when do you leave us?”

“To-morrow.”

“To-morrow ! no, no,” cried the lady forgetting her former anger, “not so soon as to-morrow.”

“It is better that it should be so.”

“But why this haste?”

“I cannot say more. Hark ! I hear Mr.

Elphingstone's knock.—I must join him again in the dining-room."

He held out his hand. Mrs. Elphingstone gave him hers. The white fingers trembled as he pressed them, a tear started in her eye, another and another came, and almost ere Herbert had left the room, she clasped her hands wildly together, and sinking on the sofa wept without restraint.

CHAPTER III.

THE difference between the effects of love in man and woman has been beautifully summed up by Lord Byron, in the lines which form the motto to our tale :—

“ Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
'Tis Woman's sole existence !

And so it is—for love, from infancy to old

age, is the leading feeling of her nature. Whether in childhood, it be the more exquisite susceptibility of a daughter's attachment,—in youth to passionate devotion for some cherished object, in womanhood, to that keenest, most mysterious, yet most beautiful of all human feelings the love of her offspring ;—or whether in old age to that self-same attachment extending to her children's children, it is *love* still, from first to last ;—all her sympathies, all her hopes, all her sunny visions whether as a girl or a woman, owe their charm, their influence, there very being to Love.

But man's love is of man's life ' a thing a part.' And so Henry Herbert found it.

His removal from the object which more than he himself at first was wont to believe had woven itself into his thoughts—his satisfaction at having achieved a triumph over himself, one the most difficult of attainment, but flattering to his self-love and self-respect—to

his honour, that gem of thought which glitters purest in the noblest minds—he felt the consciousness of having acted as became a man;—it ministered to his pride;—the errant feelings which had disturbed his peace were swamped in these reflections and other thoughts which more actively engaged him. He was employed continually in business or in pleasure, and there were few listless moments to make him remember with regret the fascinating society from which he had banished himself. Day by day its influence grew weaker; other faces and other scenes were now more frequently before him, and in a few short months Herbert could meet his patron's wife without a pulse beating quicker than friendship or gratitude might warrant. He forgot his very fears, was easy and cheerful when an invited guest at the merchant's table, and he was even inclined to believe that she had also forgotten the passion which he deemed his absence had destroyed.

It was a conclusion drawn from his own feelings,—but it was a false one. The natural pride of her nature, the quick fervour of those passions which were inherent to it, rebelled against the new turn which had been so suddenly given to the relation between young Herbert and herself; so far from secretly applauding the course which he had taken, she was against her better judgment, stung by it. He had preferred ought to her—for him she would have made any sacrifice—duty urged him to act as he did, but who that loved would bend his neck to the cold measured rules of duty? Was he then so immaculate? or was she so valueless in his eyes as to be surrendered without a pang? Had age crept so closely upon her as to make her love, and her surrender of all that was dear to purchase it, a worthless offering in the eyes of youth? Her virtue might have successfully resisted every allurement, which, love, rank, beauty, or gratified

ambition could add a value to, but it was not in her impetuous nature to be outdone in virtue by the man she loved.

And this feeling prevented her from being shocked at herself for thus admitting to her own mind that an imprudent passion occupied her heart. It was vain to disguise it now—she felt and acknowledged it; it engrossed her whole thoughts, poisoned her happiness and almost changed her nature. Had not pride and the delicacy of her sex forbidden it, she would have gone to Herbert, upbraided him passionately and confessed her love. Any odium—any suffering—any agony was preferable to this hateful slight ;—to see that bearing of his which shewed his feelings were at ease—that his desertion—his triumph over himself had been an easy conquest and a forgotten one. But Herbert was ignorant of all this, and went on increasing in favour with Mr. Elphinstone and in advantage to himself.

A few thousands had been saved out of the wreck of his father's fortune ; and inadequate as it was to purchase any share in the princely business of the wealthy merchant, he had more than hinted that after Herbert had gained experience, he would finish his good deeds to his late friend's son, by making him his partner ; and thus establishing him nearly as advantageously in life as if the banker had died in affluence and left young Herbert the wealth he once believed himself to be born to.

Month after month glided by ; another year had passed, but it had wrought no change in Mrs. Elphingstone. Time seemed even to nurse her passion and give it strength ; and Herbert felt, that after all, he stood in a position towards her which was far from being a pleasant one. Never had an expression passed between them which if told again could be construed into an offence to virtue, or an interpreter of love ; yet Mrs. Elphingstone, at

first indeed unconsciously but at last without concealing it from herself, accused him by indirect hints, reproached him by constructive expressions, and even sometimes betrayed resentment for the manner of cheerful politeness which he adopted towards her.

But alas ! how does woman, in the eyes of man, fall from her "high estate," when she assumes a guise like this. Reproach, if merited and with virtue on its side, may sometimes win back a heart, but rarely ;—it is no touchstone which love obeys, but a censor which it shrinks from. It lessens, ever lessens the complainer in the eyes of the complained against, and when not a love of innocence, must ever wither the charm which threw a halo round it.

But this observation applies not here. There was no scorpion sting in Herbert's conscience, there was no act, no word, no confessed terms of

understanding between them to make Mrs. Elphingstone assume an accuser's guise ; but there is in the human mind an impatience of reproach, and if not pure, not innocent, error never appears so forbidding as then. Herbert now felt no dread of falling into wrong. He could now fearlessly have withstood the blandishments of the fairest of " Beauty's daughters," for he loved another.

And his reason, his honour, every feeling of his nature that could strengthen such a passion was exerted in its cause. Every charm which could awaken it, every grace which could perfect it, and all the gentle affection which could endear and hallow it, were met with in its object. Herbert loved, truly and devotedly ; his heart was in another's keeping, and beat no longer to emotions already crushed and triumphed over.

Time glided on, Herbert was occasionally

absent for days from the counting house, and, even when there, was less attentive to his duty than he was wont to be. All observed that a change had taken place in Henry Herbert, and all could see that he was unhappy.

And Herbert was truly so. He excused himself from appearing at Mr. Elphingstone's table; became absent in mind in his usual bearing, while his peevishness and irritability on being expostulated with, and his repeated absences from the counting-house, gave serious disquietude to Mr. Elphingstone. The merchant was a man who had been bred from early youth to habits of regularity and discipline, and had no leniency for an opposite course. On the contrary, it appeared to him an aggravated enormity. He was as stern and unrelenting on some points, as on others he was faithful and enduring; while he believed that Herbert merited his

regard, no friend could have gone farther than his feelings would have prompted him to go; but the moment he believed that he had fallen into idleness, into habits of irregularity, and want of temper, no taskmaster could be more exacting, no justice more rigid and unmarked with charity.

The result of all this was, that one day when Mr. Elphingstone expostulated calmly but in truth severely with the young man, it was answered in an angry mood; harsh words, and indignant replies followed, and the next morning Herbert quitted the service of a kind master who for four years he had faithfully served.

Mrs. Elphingstone heard this with grief amounting to agony. She knew that Herbert of late had been irregular in his attendance at the counting-house, that he frequently went out of town; nay, that he now kept a gig for

that purpose. Jealousy took possession of her impetuous heart—she believed that Herbert had become the slave of another, and although two years had elapsed since he had ceased to be an inmate of her husband's roof, and all communion which could be considered in any other light than that of friendship, had long ceased, if indeed on one part it had ever existed, (for Herbert had nipped it in the bud, and with a prudence and right spirit of chivalrous honour beyond his years, had quitted the allurements towards which his heart had begun to lean, the moment he understood the real state of his own feelings); Although all this was the case, Mrs. Elphinstone harboured in her mind the demon of jealousy to as great an extent as if the object of it had been one who stood bound to her by the most sacred ties.

Chafed and indignant at the severity he con-

ceived he had experienced from Mr. Elphingstone, Herbert had thoughts of leaving England, and seeking his fortune in some of those new Colonies, which offer tempting baits to enterprise and ambition. He communicated this idea to the fond and lovely girl, who had joined him in mutual vows of constancy, who shared the half of his hours and all his thoughts—who loved him truly and confidingly, and was truly and devotedly loved again. She heard his intentions with a heavy heart, but determined that in weal or woe, no change of fortune should separate them. It was a dangerous resolution to express to such a lover as Henry Herbert. Ardent and full of hope, the difficulties of his situation, had little weight with him—he urged the timid girl to fulfil her resolution, and in a few weeks Henry Herbert was a married man.

It reached Mrs. Elphingstone's ears that he was living near Richmond, and that a lady was

frequently seen with him—walking, driving, or sitting together in the house which he occupied. It wanted but this to rouse her jealousy to frenzy.

Ordering the carriage she drove to Herbert's former lodgings. Here with some difficulty she learned his present residence. Excited more and more, and determined to know the truth or falsehood of what she had heard—and to end the torture of the suspense in which she was kept, she gave directions to proceed at once to the address the landlady had given her a few miles from town.

It was late in the afternoon when she arrived; leaving the carriage at the inn, she proceeded on foot to the house. It was a neat, two-story-high-building, standing in a garden, which led from the road by a wicket gate. She had scarcely entered it when the first objects which met her eyes were Herbert and a lady seated near the drawing-room window.

They withdrew from the window as she

approached. The servant who came to the door in answer to her summons, for a moment appeared to hesitate if she should admit her ; but Mrs. Elphingstone was urgent, and almost passing the servant entered a neatly furnished drawing-room. She looked round but the lady-occupant had dissappeared. Herbert saw her agitation and the anger that sparkled in her eyes, but he concealed his observation of both, and with as much composure as he could command, advanced and welcomed her to his new abode.

But Mrs. Elphingstone could neither restrain or conceal the passion which had taken possession even of her reason. She pointed to the door of an inner room and charged him with having a female concealed there. Herbert evaded the question in confusion, and requested her to be seated. But Mrs. Elphingstone became more excited at this implied denial, and declared she would be convinced. Herbert's firmness re-

turned, for already had the enraged woman advanced towards the door. "Hear me, madam," said he calmly, "I cannot permit this—I confess there is a lady there, and what is more, one who is—"

"Your wife!" cried Mrs. Elphingstone.

"She is, and as her husband I must protect her from insult, even from you."

But Mrs. Elphingstone heeded him not—her hand was on the lock of the door when it suddenly opened, and a young female who had evidently been an unwilling listener to the conversation, stood before her in all the statue-like beauty of alarm and loveliness.

With the madness of rage and jealousy Mrs. Elphingstone paused not, but unconscious of what she did endeavoured to grasp the arm, and arrest the progress of the young wife, who was rushing to seek her husband's protection. Unnerved by terror her footsteps failed her; and ere she could reach his outstretched arms

she fell, striking her temple with violence against the corner of the marble chimney-piece.

Gracious Heaven ! exclaimed Herbert rushing to raise the prostrate girl—she whom your intemperate rage has murdered, is,—*your daughter.*

CHAPTER IV.

It was morning ; its cold grey light streamed through the closed shutters of a silent room where Mrs. Elphingstone was a watcher. That single night had done the work of years, as her blanched hair, and care-stamped brow could testify;—but although those short hours of anguish, and suffering, had robbed her eye of its lustre and her cheek of its bloom, it had done that

which repaid the loss of beauty, *it had purified her heart.*

Emily still slept, and the mother looked anxiously upon her child. She was now in her nineteenth year ; the shy quiet girl had become a lovely woman. For the last three years of her life she had lived almost entirely with her aunt, with whom Herbert had gradually become on terms of intimacy and friendship, and at whose cottage he was a frequent visitor. He would often ride out to Richmond and spend the Sunday there, sometimes alone, and sometimes accompanied by Mr. Elphingstone. Here he continued to see young Emily, now blooming into womanhood ; and an attachment arose between them which ripened into love.

Mrs. Osborne was not blind to this ;—at first she neither encouraged nor opposed it, but deemed it best to allow matters to take their course ; and satisfied with Herbert's character, knowing

it to be such as any parent might be proud to own, possessing moreover her brother's plain unostentatious views of life, she was not sorry to see her niece's growing attachment to one, who was calculated to make her happy ;—rather than that she should be hung out as a gilded bait for some worthless scion of rank, a doom which from her mother's disposition, she secretly feared. Overpowered by the entreaties of the lovers, after some months had elapsed, Mrs. Osborne sanctioned their marriage ; but knowing the breach between Herbert and her brother, kept it secret until she should succeed in being a peace-maker between them ; an office which she had cheerfully charged herself with, sooner than allow two beings she so loved, to become wanderers in other lands.

“ Is Henry here ?” said the sleeper languidly opening her eyes.

“ He has gone to your aunt’s, dear Emily. How feel you now ?”

“ Better—much better.—Nay do not look so sad. I am almost recovered. How long has Herbert been away ?”

“ Not long—but your cheek is flushed with fever, Emily, and your eyes are too clear for health—your sleep, as I watched you, was broken and troubled. Will you forgive me my own Emily ?” said her mother with streaming eyes.

“ Forgive you ! and for what ? you heard of our marriage and chid Herbert for it. It was our fault not to have told you of it. At least—at least, it was mine—not Herbert’s, it was mine.—Will you forgive us ?”

Mrs. Elphingstone folded the speaker to her bosom, and her heart, though full, throbbed with thankfulness, that her child was ignorant of her error—that Emily dreamt not what her

motive had been in seeking Herbert, that she was still pure, still a mother in her daughter's eyes, and she wept again, but the tears were those of affection, of awakened virtue, of a fond, fond mother's love.

But there was still an ordeal to be passed. A messenger on the previous evening had been sent by Mrs. Elphingstone to town to inform her husband that she would remain that night at Richmond. On the following morning he had ridden out to his sister's. Great was his surprise instead of his wife and daughter to find Herbert there. Enquiries were abruptly made, his son-in-law despised concealment, and then before the aunt or mother had softened the disclosure, he told the indignant merchant that his daughter was his wife.

Mr. Elphingstone was a man not easily excited, but now every angry passion in his nature was stirred. He was proceeding to

reproaches bitterer than he had ever used, when Mrs. Osborne entered, and to his no small surprise pleaded Herbert's cause. She also told him that she was privy to the marriage and that half of the fault was hers.

Herbert left the cottage and returned home. Here he informed Mrs. Elphingstone of what had passed; and she instantly proceeded to her husband, and joined her entreaties to those of his sister for forgiveness for the young married pair. But the Merchant was still obdurate. He was a strict disciplinarian and imagined that in this case his rights as a father, a benefactor and a friend, had been trampled on and despised. He saw contumely and ingratitude in the one, and the want of filial duty in the other. He was not, he would not be appeased.

Mrs. Elphingstone tried yet another touch-

stone. His daughter was ill, he could not go to town without seeing her? It would make her wretched, she was sensible of error—at least he would go and see his daughter?”

This he consented to do, and accompanied by his wife, visited the house. Emily was reclining on a sofa when he entered; Herbert was bending over her, entreating her to be comforted for she had heard her father's determination not to forgive her. But Herbert! It was of him she thought, it was for his sake that she grieved, dutiful as she was—and never daughter loved a father better—every fear, every hope and every sorrow in her young bosom was for her husband. Mr. Elphingstone had hardly crossed the threshold when his daughter was in his arms and clasping hers around his neck sobbed, “Forgive us! Oh! my father!”

The stern heart of the merchant was not

prepared for this—it was not “in the bond.” For the first time since he had sat at a city desk his eyes became filled with tears.

His daughter kissed them away and cried in a voice of transport, “Herbert we are forgiven !”

And so it was.

Mr. Elphingstone, in spite of all that had passed, loved young Herbert like a son. He had made himself one, and there was a voice in the father’s heart, which told him that the young man, even by the act for which forgiveness was prayed, had obtained a new claim on his regard, and one to which his own feelings were not slow to respond.

Much was forgotten and all was forgiven. In a few months Herbert was admitted into partnership with his father-in-law ; he is now a wealthy merchant, and by his talents has done honor to the name.

Emily is a lovely and a happy wife;—
and Mrs. Elphingstone—alas ! for the beauty
of middle-age, Mrs. Elphingstone is now—
A GRANDMOTHER !

CHRONICLE THIRD.

THE

POOR GENTLEMAN'S SON.

THE POOR GENTLEMAN'S SON.

CHAPTER I.

“ For fear of that, I will still stay with thee ;
And never from this palace of dim night
Depart again ; here, here, will I remain
With worms that are thy chambermaids.”

ROMEO AND JULIET.

AT the time when not only our own country, but the whole civilized world, was startled at the new page which had been added to the annals of human crime ; when the atrocities of Burk and his companions were spoken of with disgust and horror, even by profligacy itself—when the inhabitants of every city in the kingdom were disturbed with rumours of their

churchyards being violated, and the feelings of relatives outraged by the harrowing thought, that the bodies of their kindred—the father, brother, the mother, perhaps the wife or sister—those gentle ones, whose very dust is sacred, and whose memories are hallowed in the heart, were mangled and exposed upon the dissecting table; it was then, that a beautiful girl, the daughter of an officer's widow, died in London. She left a brother a few years older than herself, they were the widow's only children.

Frank Hamilton was two and twenty. His father, a major in the army, a short time before his death, obtained the promise of a pair of colours for his son. He had now been dead three years, and the promise was not yet fulfilled. He left no fortune, and Frank was still dependant on his mother;—a burden on her humble pittance. It was a life which to most men would have been a painful one, to him, it was *agony*. He was too proud to dun

his patron, and too sanguine not to trust him. Weeks, months, and years passed away; without a profession, without earning a shilling, he lived in hope. If in the evening he was wretched with despondency, the morning sun brought confidence with its gladdening beams; his state of mind prevented him from directing his thoughts to any means of temporary employment; he was fitted but for few, and these were difficult to be obtained. The feelings, perhaps the prejudices of his education, made him shrink from others, there was yet a "to-morrow" to atone for the disappointment of to-day. And to-morrow came, and went again; but hope lingered still.

It was a life of bitterness. Youth's burning ambition and manhood's native pride, rebelled at the dull routine of his dependant condition; his character was ardent but sensitive and generous, and the chivalry of his feelings made

them prey upon himself. It crushed the buoyancy of his spirits, and damped the exhilaration which was natural to his years ; but did not engender moroseness, for his nature had not selfishness for that ; nor did it make his countenance abject, for Frank possessed that native dignity which poverty cannot hide, nor wealth bestow, and which, when the heart beats proudly, although beneath a threadbare coat, will still reveal the aspect of gentleman.

Yet his sorrows had a solace. There was one who could soothe him in his most troubled moments, who could decoy his anxious mind to scenes of the past, and visions of the future that he loved to dwell upon ;—who understood and admired his character, pitied his sufferings, and loved him with all her heart. It was his sister ; the being whose gentle sympathy made life endurable, and whom he loved with an affection equal to her own. And Lucy

Hamilton was a sister of whom a brother might have well been proud. She was in her nineteenth year, graceful and lovely, her mind was cultivated and generous, and her heart as pure, as warm and affectionate as ever woman's was. Every body that knew her loved her, but to her brother she was dearer than life itself. She was the good genius of his dreary destiny; the truest happiness his young life had ever known, he ascribed to her; she embodied his fondest ideas of all that was best and beautiful in earth and heaven. She died.

It was of a fever. Her illness was a short one. A week before she had walked with him, hung upon his arm, and looked up to his face to see him smile again. On her death bed she remembered the tales she had shuddered at, the instincts of humanity gave them terror even then, and she whispered to her brother "let them watch my grave."

The simoom that is said to blast the verdure

of the tree it sweeps over, and leave the boughs bared and blackening with their withered bosoms scattered on the soil, may be compared in effects to those created in Frank Hamilton's mind by his sister's death. It left him desolate, his little world of happiness was blotted out, the storms of life might burst upon him, the friend was gone who knew his sympathies, who alone could pity or cheer, or if the triumphs he once had panted for, should be his lot, there was no one to share them now. The mother's grief was wild and heart touching for her lovely girl, the brother's was more calm, but the iron had entered into his soul; the world to him was now a wilderness, in which he stood alone.

He returned from the funeral, and entered the silent, deserted parlour. There was no fond smile to meet him, no kind look to mark his troubled eye, no sweet-toned voice to whisper hope, and chase away his gloom; he

felt that first cold blank which death creates, when the body, the poor ashes, for they filled a place, are gone; when the sun shines, the household duties proceed, the unheeding faces pass, and the careless laugh of the bustling world says "your sorrows are your own."

Evening came on, and he remembered his sister's request. It touched a new chord in his bosom. A fearful thought for the first time arose in his mind. With restless dread he saw night approach, and formed the resolution to watch the grave himself. His startled mother when he informed her of this, in vain endeavoured to dissuade him from it, others could be procured; his state of mind and body alike unfitted him for such a task; but Frank's course was taken. He put pistols in his pocket, buttoned himself up in his great coat, and departed on his melancholy errand. The Sexton assured him that the duty he assigned himself was unnecessary; that the police, the high

walls, and the watchman in the neighbourhood of the place were sufficient to protect it ; but Frank was deaf to these representations, he demanded admission, and was left in the churchyard by his sister's grave.

It was a calm winter night. The sky rose high, the bright stars trembled there as pure and beautiful as if instead of the gray tombstones of a city burial ground, they were shining on a summer lake. The air was keen and nipping, the sounds of passing carriages died away on the forsaken streets, the cry of the reveller ceased, and the silence became as deathlike as the scene.

Day dawned, and Frank still sat there. His head was drooping on his hands, his hat was silvered with the hoar frost, and his face was wan and care worn.

The following night he kept the same gloomy watch. The sky during the day had been, overcast, and at sunset the rain fell. It con-

tinued all that night. The stars were shrouded, the black clouds mingled with the darkness, and the wind blew pitilessly. The streets were sooner deserted, the lights in the distant windows were extinguished one by one, the watchman sought shelter from the rapid rain, and Frank sat alone among the dead. Once he thought he heard footsteps approaching, he started, and listened with breathless attention, the sound ceased, he heard only the gusts of the wind, the pattering of the rain, and the quick beating of his own heart. His eyes could not penetrate the darkness, the sounds were not renewed. "It was the rain dashing on the tombs," thought he, "my imagination has deceived me. It may well do so, while my mind doubts so often its own consciousness, and asks if all this is real?"

The cold bleak morning came again, the gray light struggled through the watery clouds,

life and labour wakened in the busy city, and Frank passed from the silent churchyard into the noisy street. He returned home and retired to rest, to gain strength for the watching of another night. On removing his damp clothes he fainted, and was afterwards seized with a violent fit of shivering. His mother, sorrow-stricken as she was from other causes, had passed an unhappy night on his account, and now stood weeping by his bed side. At length, wearied nature, more than her assiduous ministering, relieved him, and he slept.

The red wintry sun was sinking in the horizon and its feeble rays trembling in the silent chamber, when Frank awoke from his troubled slumber. His hot forehead seemed chained to the pillow, a burning fever seized him, his languid spirits sunk, and the tears and entreaties of his mother at length overcame his resolution of going forth that night again. The

Sexton was requested to procure a watchman, he promised to do so.

Ill, wearied, and exhausted, Frank sank into a state of stupor. But with the morning consciousness returned, and he reproached himself for his absence from his sister's grave. "It was her last request," thought he, "and I have neglected it; my slightest wish never met neglect from *her*, she would sit and watch night and day for me, there was no sacrifice she would not make, and yet I have deserted her very ashes, and left them to a hireling's care." His unhappiness increased the fever, and he spent a day of wretchedness.

Night came on again, and his mother renewed her entreaties that he would not stir abroad. Enfeebled in mind and body; notwithstanding the anguish he had already felt, he had no spirit to bear up against her pressing solicitations, and once more acceded to them.

She left him and retired to rest. But Frank could not sleep; dark surmises continued to rise like phantoms in his mind, they haunted and harrassed him. The long hours passed slowly by, and the torture of his thoughts increased. At length burning with fever, and maddened with doubt and fear, he arose, dressed himself, and left the house unheard.

He proceeded to the churchyard; the gate was locked; he shouted, but no one answered. He went to the Sexton and roused him. The man was loth to quit his warm bed to go out in such a night; but Frank, frenzied with impatience and alarm, would not be denied. A dark lantern was procured, and they went together to the burying ground. The heavy gate was swung open, they entered and reached the grave. It presented no mark of having been disturbed, yet Frank was not satisfied. He insisted that it should be opened! The

Sexton refused, but the other, now agitated to fierceness, compelled him to bring his spade, and commence the singular task. The turf was removed, the brown mound was shovelled away, and the Sexton stood on the deepening grave. The wind howled over the place, the rain kept falling fast, and the night was pitchy dark. Frank held up the lantern, he was deadly pale but his eyes were wild and restless. The Sexton struck his spade upon the coffin, and declared that no one had disturbed it.

Frank with a sudden impulse held the lantern into the grave. "There is a white splinter!" cried he in a startling voice, "remove the earth at the coffin head."

The man did so, the ground seemed looser there, he uttered an exclamation of surprise; the last shovelful shewed that the head of the

coffin had been wrenched off, he stooped down
—it was empty !

“ Oh God !” cried Frank “ my sister !” He
stagtered and fell senseless on the wet cold
turf.

CHAPTER II.

THE Sexton raised him, and held up the lantern in alarm. Its feeble light threw a pale glare upon the face, and made it ghastly; the raindrops fell unheeded upon it, he did not breathe. There was no assistance near; the man became more alarmed, the heavy shower was pattering on the empty coffin in the open grave; the sound grated on the ear, he

shivered with horror, and panic-stricken was about to fly from the spot, when a heavy breathing, like a stifled sob, from the youth he supported in his arms, made him remain and abide the issue of this fearful scene.

Consciousness returned, and Frank sank upon a tombstone, and covered his face with his hands. Meantime the Sexton was filling up the grave. It was soon level with the ground, and he was raising the round mound again, when Frank arose, and, holding the lantern to the spot, desired him to conceal all traces of its having been disturbed.

The man, surprised at his collected manner, gave a sudden glance towards him, but was startled at the look he encountered. The eyes of the youth were bright and sparkling, his face, his very lips were of ashy paleness, and a certain wildness of expression seemed to struggle with the calm air which he forced himself to assume. The Sexton, however,

obeyed or seemed to obey, he piled the little mound carefully, scraped the scattered earth from the sides of the grave, and covered it with the turf again. Frank, with the lantern examined it, the Sexton threw his spade upon his shoulder, and asked him if he were satisfied.

"I am," said the other, "and now I would speak with you."

The man paused as if he waited to hear him.

"It rains hard," continued Frank, "I will accompany you to your house."

His companion muttered something about the lateness of the hour. Frank suddenly raised the lantern. The man seemed to shrink from the scrutiny. Without another word they left the churchyard and in a few minutes found themselves in a room of the Sexton's house.

The first thing Frank did was to lock the

door and secure the key. He then seated himself, and taking a pair of pistols from his great-coat pocket, laid them on the table before him. The light now revealed yet more fearfully his wild and haggard aspect. He was evidently highly excited, and this the stern calmness of manner which he continued to preserve could not hide.

The Sexton watched him with increasing uneasiness, but seemed anxious to avoid his keen, scrutinizing look.

“ My sister’s grave has been robbed,” said Frank in the same calm tone. “ Can you guess where the body is ?”

“ Me !—Not I—Lord, sir, how can I guess ! This is the first time our churchyard has ever—”

“ Which of the schools do you think most likely to have obtained the body ?”

“ The Lord above only knows, sir. There is Dr. * * * * *’s, and Dr. * * * * *’s. I hear

both of them have been badly supplied this winter."

"There is Dr. * * * * 's."

"Ah, yes, but that is not a likely place—they—they don't want bodies there."

"We shall examine Dr. * * * * 's school first," said Frank, fixing his burning eyes upon his companion. The man shrank back. Frank gave a wild laugh. "They say indeed," continued he, "that Sextons sometimes wink at these hellish robberies, and make merchandize of the dead corpses which they have buried. But the Sexton of * * * * is none of these. Nay, keep your seat, or by the God who frowns, and the fiend who laughs, I will shoot you like a dog!" He cocked the pistol and levelled it.

The Sexton crouched in his seat.

"Mark me," continued Frank, becoming more and more excited, "to-morrow, before any alarm can have been given, before any

communication can have passed between you and these plunderers of graves, we shall go to the nearest magistrate and obtain a warrant to give us the right of search. Hah! if you shout, I fire! We must spend the night together."

"I cannot sit here 'till morning," said the Sexton. "You have no right to act as you do. I will accompany you wherever you please."

"Ha! ha! ha! And get you bold upon it! They say a madman never loads the weapons he threatens with," said Frank, drawing out the wadding of one of the pistols and shaking out the ball into his hand. "Now," continued he loading it again. and-examining the priming, "you see for once that saying is wrong."

"Do not point the pistol," cried the other trembling, "I will not stir."

"Be it so; yet honest men would cry thanks, if I rid the world of such a miscreant.

Hark how the wind blows ! you dog," continued he with flashing eyes " what a fiend are you to torture men's feelings thus ! to sleep when churchyards are robbed, and fill your purse with the price of rifled graves ! Ah ! my fingers itch to clutch that throat of yours. —My poor sister ! poor, poor Lucy !—But this dream will pass away, and to-morrow I will tell it to you—yet, dream or vision, it is a long, black night. Come, let us have a song—

And they drank out of skulls newly torn from the grave,
Dancing round them pale spectres are seen,
Their liquor is blood, and this horrible stave
They shriek—

" Ha ! ha ! ha ! what a craven you are !—
Will the candle last 'till day break ?"

" It will," said the trembling Sexton.

" It's cold—cold—and the place smells
of the grave ! How the rain beats on that
rattling window !—Hell's messengers are abroad
to-night."

“ For God’s sake, sir,” cried the shivering Sexton, “ do not speak in that way.”

Frank crossed his arms and sank back in his chair. His eyes seemed fixed on vacancy, but on the slightest sound he looked towards the door with a glance as quick and keen as the hawk’s when watching her prey.

The morning dawned, the early hours passed tediously away, and Frank still sat with his companion, or rather his prisoner, in that cheerless room. About nine o’clock they proceeded together to the residence of a magistrate. Here his self-possession did not desert him. He told the horror-struck gentleman the errand on which he came, waited until the Sexton had corroborated his statement, and then, in a firm, confident tone, accused *him* of having been accessory to the crime, and demanded that he should be retained in custody.

The Magistrate, still more surprised, turned

to the Sexton, whose alarmed looks, and vehement protestations of innocence only gave weight to the charge. Frank urged it with renewed excitement, demanded a warrant of search, and that an officer in plain clothes should accompany him.

The jealous attention which he thus paid to every means calculated to remove obstacles from the object which he had in view was at strange variance with the occasional wildness of his manner; but the latter was easily accounted for by the harrowing situation in which he was thrown; the Magistrate without scruple assented to all his demands, and in a few minutes Frank left the house accompanied as he had desired.

The raw morning wind played upon his pallid cheek; the passengers whom he met looked with surprise at his ghastly aspect, and ere he had walked many yards his brain grew

dizzy, and he was compelled to lean on the policeman for support. A coach station was speedily reached, the officer hailed a well-horsed cab, and they drove towards Dr. * * * * 's class-room.

Their visit was unexpected. The porter for a moment demurred, but he was taken by surprise, the doors were all unbarred, resistance would have been fruitless.

They entered the place.

There, on a table before a row of empty benches, lay the body of Lucy Hamilton.

Nature, reason, the fortitude of manhood all gave way, and Frank Hamilton gave a yell of horror !

That night the sister's remains were carried in a coffin to the grave again ; and that night, the brother lay pinioned in a mad-house !

The next day was the sabbath. He heard the sweet chiming bells ; they calmed his

frenzy, and he wept! The following sunday they were tolling for his funeral!

And the Widow, where is she? She lives, but her heart is broken. She lives alone. The summer comes, but it brings no joy to her; the winter returns, but her hearth is desolate. There is one long, sad silence within her walls. The tumult of life goes on, Princes die, interests war, and crowds are busy with the gossip of the day, but *she* knows not, heeds not, listens not to these, her connexion with this world is already told—she lives!

Poor mother! your proud boy and your lovely girl—your all are gone! but the scorpion thought that will not sleep, that nameless pang which shrinks from sympathy, that wound which still will bleed even if the bitterness of bereavment could pass away, remains. Peace be with thee!

Aye, let the scoffer pause and apply his miserable philosophy to sufferings like thine;

let him compare them with that beneficence, creative or of order, which even the materialist allows, let him do this, and bound atonement by the limits of time ; the idol of reason will refute its worshipper, and the chain of universality will snap !

CHRONICLE FOURTH.

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER.

CHAPTER I.

" There is an eye aloft that keeps
For him who ploughs the billow,
The same look out as he who sleeps,
On home's domestic pillow."

Songs of the Ship.

SOME years ago there stood a white walled cottage, with latticed windows, well tended garden, and many a little token of cheerfulness and industry, on the Surry side of the Thames, midway between Greenwich and London.

There are many cottages there now, there were many then, but none that ever looked so neat, so "tidy" (that genuine and expressive English word,) as the Widow Temple's. In summer the flowers there were earliest in bloom, and in winter while the gardens around seemed neglected and desolate, that was snugly trimmed, and with its rows of fresh-looking evergreens, its pruned fence and wicker gate, appeared as cheerful as ever.

Often on a summer day was the Widow seen there, either working with her needle at the open window, or sitting so employed before the house in her little garden now and then casting a look towards the river as some vessel glided by ;—and a smile on those occasions would light her mild features, as she listened to the cheering cry of the sailors, or when some gallant ship passed with its taut rigging and taper spars, rising boldly and gracefully with the bend that mariners admire. She would resume

her needle again with a pleased and happy look as if the object had recalled an image to her memory that was grateful to it.

But there were periods when the cottage wore a yet more cheerful aspect, and the Widow herself a happier guise. It was when her son, a sunburnt but handsome young man, was her guest, a generous, frank, and manly fellow, the captain of a merchant vessel, her only child, her support, her comfort, and her pride. He would come home and dress to walk out with her in the summer evenings, his neat blue suit, clear white linen, and bold, manly features in fine keeping with the light-hearted character and gallant aspect of the calling to which he belonged. He would lead her to church on Sunday, linger with her in her modest garden, admire with good-natured interest the beauties she pointed out; act the host with genuine kindness and hearty goodwill to the little circle of friends whom in the

pride of her humble heart his mother would then call around her, while these, and every other act of attention was enhanced by the willing cheerfulness with which it was done.

It was a happy season, a joyous time, to that humble hearth, when Hugh Temple returned to spend a few short weeks again at his mother's home. Kind ever was their meeting, and the hardy youth who had dared the sternest dangers of the seas with an intrepid eye, would while his widowed mother clasped him in her arms, raise his rough hand to dash away the tear which though he strove to hide it, did him honor.

Then would he unfold the presents he had brought her from foreign shores, speak of the happiness her letters had given him, and look with pleasure on the little comforts she had provided for him. Nor was the poor orphan girl who acted as her servant forgotten, he would present her also with some gift which to

her was treasure, and as far as his limited means allowed, confer bounty and goodness upon all.

These were happy days. But a sad reverse was at hand. The vessel which Hugh commanded was employed in foreign trade; frequently between far distant ports, and this necessarily created long absences from England. He had now been away nine months, when the Widow heard with joy, that his ship was chartered from Vera-Cruz to Liverpool. He wrote to his mother from the former port, mentioning the time when he should sail, and the happiness he felt at the prospect of soon meeting her. With a thankful heart she prepared to receive him, put the cottage in yet neater order, and tended the little garden with more attentive care; the bedroom he usually occupied was decked anew, she had many a tale to tell him, many a surprise of some new comfort awaiting him, some barely expressed wish he had for-

merly made, which although he perhaps had forgotten she had remembered, and there it was already fulfilled; she pictured to herself his gratified smile, his kind grateful look, their evening walks, his merry voice, and well known knock at her humble door again. The days passed away, and every morning she felt a new delight at the nearer prospect which she had of meeting him.

The ship was expected to arrive early in June. Many a plan of amusement was formed, and glad moments of affectionate intercourse thought upon; June came, and now every day she looked for a letter intimating his arrival, and when he would come to London. The early part of the month glided by, but yet no letter came—no intimation reached her: the shipping list was procured, but still Hugh's vessel was unmentioned in the Liverpool arrivals. Weeks ran on, the month was drawing to a close, still no letter appeared, she became anxious and

uneasy, the postman was waited for every morning, but every morning he passed by the wicket gate.

July came—bright and sunny, but now the Widow was restless and unhappy; she went to the office of the owners of the vessel; but they had received no advices of her arrival, and she returned to her lonely cottage to grieve and to hope again.

Every morning she watched and waited anxiously for the postman. She heard him knock at her neighbour's house, her heart fluttered—but again he passed by *her* cottage door. Another weary day had to be passed, another anxious morning to be longed for, and another disappointment to be borne. The ship was now “out of time.”

One morning about the middle of the succeeding month, her servant girl who in some degree shared the anxiety of her mistress, had just given notice that the postman was at hand, when his

loud knock at the door made the Widow's heart bound, and with tears of joy starting to her eyes she rushed to receive the letter which was put into her hands.

She glanced at the address, the hand-writing did not look like her son's. She hurried into her room, and with trembling hands tore open the letter.

It was a short note from the owners of the vessel intimating that as the ship was now so long out of time, they were compelled to stop the monthly payment her son allowed her from his wages.

Oh, it was a bitter moment ! The cold check which her sudden joy received tore her very heart. She wept and looked round the silent room. "He will never come again," sobbed the poor Widow. "My boy has perished !"

The Autumn months came, and passed, and yet the mother clung to hope. The postman

still was watched, many a supposition accounting for the absence of the ship called up in her anxious mind, day after day she pined in restless anguish, which was even bitterer perhaps than to have known the worst.

The Winter began to draw near, but her limited means were well nigh exhausted. The cottage rent was due, she was forced to sell the furniture and remove into London lodgings. Yet she still clung to the fond hope that a bright day would come which would atone for all.

But it came not ! The Spring returned, the days began to lengthen, the sun to shine brighter, and the Summer leaves to wear their greenest verdure ; but still no tidings reached her. Her scanty supply of money was diminishing fast, she must bethink her of some means to earn a livelihood ;—with a desolate heart she must labour for her daily bread.

And the Widow, humble and sorrow-stricken.

as she was, had a proud and honest heart. She would not be dependent on the bounty of others, she could labour with her needle ; and He who "stilleth the young ravens when they cry," would not forsake the widowed and the childless mother.

Her first task was a sad one She had not yet gone into mourning for her son, twelve months were passed, reason told her that now all hope was over, and affection whispered her that this was a tribute which she ought to pay. From her small store she took what bought the materials for her mourning dress, and with a heavy heart began to prepare it.

Next morning she rose early, and resumed her task. The sun was shining cheerfully, the sky was calm and blue, and even the narrow London street that her window looked out upon, had something in it of the brightness of summer. Suddenly she heard the postman's knock at the street door—she started—her heart throb-

bed, she dropped the work upon her knee and listened breathlessly. She heard a step on the stairs, it passed the first floor, it was coming up, she trembled, might not *this* be the long looked for letter? The footsteps approached—they passed her door, she heard that of the adjoining apartment opened—the letter was for another lodger, it was not for her;—and she bent over the mourning dress and wept.

CHAPTER II.

THE traveller who looks on London for the first time, the foreigner who passes through the thick forest of masts that line its wide river, and gazes on the dense far-spread buildings—the citizen himself who regards it from St. Pauls, or some of the well known hills in the neighbourhood of the huge capital, and see its—

“ Dusky masses starting to the sky,”

feels emotions of pride at the seeming greatness of his country, or sentiments of admiration at "*la puissance de l'Angleterre*," but rarely pauses to think on the sad scenes in life's gloomy drama which are passing amid the majestic vastness of those crowded buildings ; the aching hearts that beat under those sun-glittering roofs, the soul-sick pangs, the Widow's tears and the Orphan's cry for bread ; the kindness of the humble, the iron oppression of the proud, the charity of the needy, the bounty of those who have little to spare, and the scourge, the grinding meanness of the Great whose good deeds are chronicled and blazoned to the world ; the sin and the sorrow, the infancy that is not innocent, the youth that knows no gladness, and the old age that is familiar with despair. No !—the traveller, the stranger, and the citizen look only on the mass ; but the beauty of the image would be sullied, the majesty of the grouping would

melt away, if the pale array of Misery's victims that are harboured there, could mingle with the magnificence, and lead the imagination to other scenes, than the pomp of domes or the sovereignty of myriads.

And there in an obscure lodging of a retired street, the Widow Temple lived, earning a scanty livelihood, by the poorly paid labours of her needle. She occupied one little room, rose early and sat up late;—no one visited her, she had hidden herself and her sorrows from all who had previously known her, she worked, toiled, for her income, limited as it was, was precarious, and in addition to her woes, she was haunted by the constant dread of becoming a dependant on the charity of strangers. Many were the trials, those nameless but bitter trials of poverty, which she was compelled to bear; the rudeness even of those from whom she purchased the necessaries of life, the tyranny of those for whom she laboured,

Often after carrying home what her industry had completed, after walking many a weary mile to receive the wages she had struggled so hard to earn, and on which perhaps her next scanty meal depended, she would be told to call another time, be turned almost roughly from the door, and with weary limbs commence her homeward way again ; yet she bore it all with meekness, and although her thin features, and the moulded melancholy of her look betrayed a hard condition and an anguished heart, her manner and her words were gentle, no one heard her complain, and if she wept it was when she was alone.

For two years it was thus she lived. But her appearance was now changed, her step was feeble, and although she had hardly reached the meridian of life, her hair was silvered, and her look had the aspect of age. She was often ill, and these periods made sad encroachments on her narrow income ; a stinted board, long hours

of labour, decaying strength, and a weary heart, were the companions of the Widow's solitude. Yet still she worked and rejected firmly, but gratefully, the offers of assistance which her neighbours, poor as they themselves were, had been induced to make ; with trembling hands and a feeble frame she toiled industriously while she was able to toil, and amid the vicissitudes of illness, protracted payments, and want of work, the poor Widow preserved her independance.

One incident alone, (it was the last), revived for a time her former hopes. An English vessel had been captured by Pirates on the coast of South America, the crew of which, through the intervention of one of their captors, were spared their lives, and allowed to escape to Havannah. This was an Englishman, the only one on board the Pirate vessel, the rest being Spaniards and Blacks. The rescued sailors spoke warmly in favor of

their countryman who they affirmed was only in such a confederacy by necessity, not choice. During the time of their captivity all intercourse between him and themselves had been jealously prevented, and to his evident chagrin, they left the ship without any communication having passed between them, which he had once or twice attempted without effect. From one of the Blacks however, they learned that he had commanded an English Merchant ship which they had taken about two years before, and had been forced into their service, on account of his superior knowledge of navigation ; and that, of the rest of his crew, some were on board other Pirate vessels and the rest in slave-ships trading on the coast.

Such was the account that found its way into the newspapers, and by accident reached the Widow Temple. It brought back hopes so keenly to her thoughts that their recurrence was even painful. It was so like her boy, so

like his generous manly character to interfere as he had done; the date too of the ship's capture, the seas it was said she was taken in, all seemed to corroborate the exulting thought that still he lived. She forsook her work, every other thought and employment, and endeavoured to find out the Captain or the sailors who had made the report. But alas! the news had reached her too late for that; the Captain was gone to sea again, his crew had gone to other ports, even the account she had read was contradicted in many quarters, and she was recommended to place no reliance on it, "as most of the numerous tales about Havannah Pirates, and South American slave ships, were mere fabrications and intended for no other purpose than to fill the columns of a newspaper." She walked from place to place, she had no friend to assist her in the enquiry, and the more she herself pursued it, the more cheerless did it appear.

Disheartened, tortured with new hopes and fears she still continued her weary search; wandered from house to house where tidings of any of the crew might be gained, in the hope they might have mentioned something, made some remark, remembered some circumstance, that would enable her to recognize her son in the English sailor who had protected them. But every inquiry failed, and every answer served only to crush and dispel the hope which seemed to have been awakened but to tear open the wounds of her heart again, and leave them bleeding.

These exertions of mind and body gave the last shock to her sinking frame. A long sickness followed them. Her slender purse was exhausted, she could labour no more. Her humble neighbours visited her, and strove to assuage her sufferings, they attempted to soothe, to condole;—the dying woman thanked them with tears of gratitude, but her sorrows

lay too deep for the sympathy of words or kindness.

The wintry rain was pouring in torrents, the narrow street was deserted and silent, it was a Sabbath forenoon, the city bells had ceased to chime and a heavy sky hung over the cheerless scene.

The Widow lay upon her death bed. Her features were sharp and thin, her white lips trembled with laboured breathings, her hands were clasped upon her breast, her mild eyes were turned towards heaven. There were two women by her bedside, one was bathing her temples another stood gazing with tear-filled eyes upon the struggling ebbings of parting life. The room was in disorder, the rusty crape bonnet lay in one corner, the faded gown in another, the fire was going out, the window was dim and gloomy ; it was the death-bed of poverty—and all was desolate. A knock was heard at the door. It was repeated after a

short pause, louder and more urgent. The Widow started at the sounds, her eyes brightened suddenly, and raising her trembling hand she made a sign to one of the women to answer the summons. This was done. A few hurried words were heard below, and then an active step hastily ascending the stairs.

The door was thrown open and a young man in a Sailor's dress rushed into the room. Gazing for a moment on the dying woman he knelt down beside the bed, and covering his face with his hands murmured in a voice almost inarticulate from emotion, "My mother!"

Dashing the tears away with his rough hand, he looked up to her face. "I am well," cried he, "rich—we shall be happy again. Live! oh! live, my mother!"

Her features changed, her eyes turned fondly on her boy, she raised them in silent gratitude, looked again upon the kneeling

youth ; and although her lips had no language, Hugh felt *that* look conveyed a Mother's blessing.

The eyes grew dim, the bosom fluttered no more, the Widow's wearied heart was at rest !

CHRONICLE FIFTH.

THE COUNTY MEMBER.

THE COUNTY MEMBER.

CHAPTER I.

"Fling away ambition,
By that sin fell "the angels."

SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY VIII.

AMID the waving of handkerchiefs and shoutings of the throng, Sir Henry Comyn, the popular candidate, was escorted through the Town of——, having just been returned Member for the county. All was joy and hilarity; yet a shade of sadness sat on the brow of his fair young wife, as she gazed upon the trium-

phant procession from a window of the inn to which his constituents conducted her husband. Amid the pride that woman *must* feel in seeing him she most loves so idolized, Lady Julia felt a vague wish that he had not been elected.

The Session was at hand and she knew she must lose his society. Yes he would quit the peaceful scenes where the first two years of their married life had been so happily passed, and leave her to all the loneliness of regret ; for Lady Julia was about to become a mother, and could not follow Sir Henry to the noise and bustle of the Metropolis, whither his Parliamentary duties would now call him. These reflections gave a mournful cast to the beautiful countenance of his wife, as she removed the ribbon-coronet in imitation of laurel, from Sir Henry's brow, and greeted his return with a kiss of welcome.

Another month saw the young Member take

his seat in the House, and for the first time since their marriage separated him from the arms of Julia. She had just given birth to a son, who had scarcely received a father's embrace, ere he hurried away to the Metropolis to commence his career.

Seated in his elegantly furnished apartments at the west end of the town, after the fatigues of the debate were over, Sir Henry, in his temporary bachelorship, would at first often contemplate the image of Lady Julia and his peaceful home, with a half-regretful sigh. These tender reveries, so honourable to the *heart* of the husband and the father, were soon put to flight by the feelings of ambition that arose in the *head* of the senator and the man. Sir Henry was on the popular side, and self vanity whispered that he owned talents, only wanting opportunity, to win, for their possessor, fame and honour.

Amongst the many young men of fashion who sought his society, Lord Vivian Roslyn, was the most pleasing and congenial to his taste. To a brilliant wit the young nobleman joined manners the most fascinating; their political creed was the same, and Vivian Roslyn soon became the chosen friend and constant companion of Sir Henry. Her husband's letters to Lady Julia glowed with encomiums of the fashionable Peer; and the fond wife half chid the jealous feeling that arose in her thoughts, to find there existed a being save herself, who could occupy in Sir Henry's heart that void, which not even the smiles of her infant son could supply to her own.

Three months had now passed, and Sir Henry had never for a single day been able to detach himself from the duties of the Senate to revisit the repining Julia. True, he wrote

frequently, but his letters by imperceptible degrees grew short and less familiar—all those little details of how he had passed his time, which formed the chief part of his earlier epistles, were now omitted; a coldness was creeping over his manner like shadows upon the sun-dial,—and a mistrust of she knew not what, over Julia's heart. Her health was now re-established, and the anxious wife pressed to be allowed to join her husband. An assent was granted, and Sir Henry informed her that he had secured a fashionable mansion in Belgrave Square. With eager and trembling haste the young mother journeyed with her infant treasure towards the Metropolis. In what vivid colouring did her fond anxiety picture the meeting after so long a separation! In that blissful idea the little coldnesses that had wounded her were forgotten: before the ardour of true affection, all melted away, like snow

before the sun-beam. How did fancy dwell upon the eager gladness with which the young father would welcome his scarce seen boy !

As the carriage whirled rapidly through the crowded streets, Lady Julia leaned back to conceal the emotions, she found it impossible to controul, and distinctly might she have counted the throbbings of her anxious heart. The wished for moment had arrived—the carriage entered the Square, and drew up before the door of a large and handsome house—the step was let down, and Lady Julia was received—not into the arms of an impatient husband, but by the well-bred bow of an obsequious and powdered lacquey, who informed her that his master was attending a call of the House, from whence he did not expect he would return till past midnight. A chill fell on the heart of the disappointed wife, and a flood of the bitterest tears she had ever shed, bathed the cheek of

the sleeping cherub, cradled in her arms, and relieved her over-charged bosom from suffocation.

* * * * *

“ My love ! how can you be so absurd as to expect me to go every where with you ? ” said Sir Henry in a half peevish tone. “ You know I *must* attend my duty at the House, and that will detain me late ; and afterwards I *must* just look in at the club and sup with a new member, who is half inclined to come over to our side. Take Vivian with you to the Opera ; he’s not a man of business, and will be too happy to attend you.” “ Ah Harry,” replied the mortified wife, “ would we were again at Roselands, where you had nothing else to do but ride, walk, and read with me.” “ Well my love, I wish so too,” answered Sir Henry, “ but we must make some sacrifice in these times for the good of one’s Country. Surely if *I* do not murmur, my Julia need not ? When a man gets into parliament, you know—”

“ *He neglects his wife,*” thought Lady Julia, for she was ever too gentle to give unkindness utterance.

Thus days and weeks were passed, and Roslyn was the constant attendant on his friend’s wife to all those places of fashionable resort her situation in society and the natural love of seeing and being seen, so inherent in the female breast, led Lady Julia to frequent. Nothing is more dangerous to a woman’s virtue than *neglect*. A wife can bear much from the man she loves—jealously—pevishness—unkindness in all its sad variety of shapes ;—but *neglect* is the blighting canker-worm that creeps to the very core of woman’s tenderness, withering and destroying all within its reach. The woman of weak and little mind will sink beneath neglect crushed like the blade of grass we tread under our heedless footsteps ; but if she be of a lofty and daring spirit, she will do *worse*,

seek *revenge* !—aye *revenge*, though it is bought at the price of her own soul !

Things were in this undomestic state, when one morning, as Sir Henry sat listlessly lounging over the breakfast table (his lady not having risen), pondering, it might be, the *national* or some other debt which nearer concerned *his* interest—a servant announced “ Farmer Jones, from Roselands, was below.”

“ Admit him instantly,” was the reply ; “ he is one of my constituents, and was my warmest supporter at the election. I hope, however, the old man is not come to ask for a place or pension,” thought Sir Henry as he entered.

“ Well, Jones, and how goes on all at Roselands ?” asked the Member.

“ Why, main badly indeed, Sir Harry,” answered the farmer, “ main badly ; as I had to come to Lunnon on business like, I thought I’d make bold to call and tell you so. Look ye, Sir Harry, I served your father and grandfather,

afore him, and I should not wish to see you ruined, I'll tell you a bit of plain truth—this Parliamentary business *will* ruin you."

"How so, friend Jones? I hope I have discharged my duty conscientiously."

"Duty," replied the old man, shaking his head, "I take it *duty*, like *charity*, ought to begin at *home*, and all's going to rack and ruin there. The dogs are as lean, and the horses are as rough, as though they had not had a meal's meat or a rub down this last twelvemonth. And then there's my lady's flower-garden, as she used to be so fond on, why it's all overgrown with chick-weed; and nothing's ever given away at the hall now;—if a poor body goes to the door to ask a mouthful of bread he's told, 'Oh! master's gone to Lunnun a parliamenting, and we are all on *board wages* here.' And then all the beautiful rooms are shut up, and the place looks more like a nun-

nery than the mansion of an English Baronet. I'll tell ye what, Sir Harry—don't be angry with me for giving an old man's advice—go down to Roselands, live on your estate, give bread to your starving tenantry by employing them, and dang me if you won't be more of a real Patriot, and do more good to your countrymen than all the long speeches we read in the paper, of your making here in the House of Commons”

Whether the eloquence of honest Jones, or the “still small voice” that spake within the breast of Sir Henry, caused a relaxation in his attendance on those fancied “duties” hitherto so arduously pursued, was never known;—but the next day the young Baronet told his delighted Julia that he intended returning with her to Roselands the following week.

“Oh! my dear Henry, I am *so* glad,” said Lady Julia, “I shall see my own pretty garden

again, and ride my dear Arabian pony, and we will read and walk together, and be so happy."

And the fond wife's anticipations of happiness *were* realized for they were founded on *reason*. They returned to Roselands—Lady Julia with a lightened *heart*, her husband with a *lightened purse*. At first the Member found a country life somewhat monotonous after the bustle and excitement of a London Session; but in the cares his half ruined estate required to restore it to its original order, the society of his Julia, and the hourly expanding beauties of his infant heir, Sir Henry had enough to keep his mind from stagnating, or sinking into that indolence too often the follower of active exertion.

Domestic duties grew daily more pleasing; and when at the dissolution of Parliament early the following year, his constituents offered

to return Sir Henry again, the offer was gratefully yet firmly declined ; for the Husband and Father had seen too many of its temptations and evils to hazard the loss of his domestic peace by venturing on another Session !

CHRONICLE SIXTH.

MRS. SIMPSON.

NOTE.

The author claims the usual license of the Novelist, for having written the Chronicle of Mrs. Simpson, in the first person masculine ; which is the only fictitious part of the story.

MRS. SIMPSON.

CHAPTER I.

“ Do justice
For truth’s sake, and thy conscience.”

SHAKESPEARE.

THEY were the sweetest eyes I ever beheld, as I caught an occasional glance through their dark silken lashes, as she bent in silence over her sleeping boy. “ Who *can* she be ?” I mentally exclaimed ; “ so young, so unprotected.— Pshaw ! what matters it to me *who* she is !”

The twilight of an Autumn evening was fast

deepening into night, and as the coach in which we were fellow-travellers whirled rapidly along, I drew my cloak around me, and tried to compose myself to slumber. For a time, that oblivion which is "not sleep, but a continuance of enduring thought," overpowered me; but my dozings were broken and restless—the image of the bankrupt Simpson rose before me, and the four hundred pounds I had lost by his insolvency disturbed my reverie, and rendered me fidgetty and uncomfortable. True, my income of three thousand a year would not be lessened by it, nor my rent-roll decreased; yet still I felt galled, as every man does who loses four hundred pounds.

"Well, I've refused to sign his certificate, so the fellow will not profit by my loss," thought I; "that's some consolation;"—and with this noble feeling of revenge against a man I had never seen (for Simpson had in-

curred this debt by becoming security for a faithless friend), I again endeavoured to "seal my eyelids down, and sleep my senses in forgetfulness."

But it would not do; and after twenty fruitless efforts to woo and win the dull-eyed God, by shifting my position from corner to corner of the side I alone occupied, I gave it up in despair. In silence, then, I contemplated my opposite companion. She, it seemed, was wakeful as myself, and ever and anon, as the coach stopped to change horses through the night, she drew a folded paper from her bosom, and by the dim light of a lamp at an inn door, or the occasional gleam cast upon us by the ostler's lantern, threw a timid yet anxious glance over it, as if to ascertain its safety, and again deposited it in her bosom.

With the early morning we reached the market town, to which the coach was destined; and my horse and gig awaited me at the door

of the hotel at which we stopped. On alighting, my companion demanded of the waiter how far it was to Fairlight House, and if any public conveyance went that way?

The man glanced at me, and replied, "It was ten very bad miles, and a coach went past it only twice in a week, and not before Monday," (this was Saturday).

"Then I must proceed on foot," replied the questioner, with a sigh. "Oblige me with a basin of milk and some bread for my little boy, and instruct me the road I must take."

As she spoke, she took up a small box in one hand, and her child in the other, and was entering the inn. I advanced and stated, I hope respectfully, that I was myself going towards Fairlight, and as my servant would proceed on a saddle-horse, could accommodate herself and child with a seat in my gig, I added, smiling, as I saw hesitation in her

countenance, "You may trust me, madam; my horse is not very spirited, and I am a careful driver."

"I will accept your offer, sir," was the modest reply, "more on account of this poor boy than myself, for my eagerness to get to Fairlight would make the way seem short, and, if possible, I must return to London by to-night's mail from this place."

Our first mile was passed in silence.

We then spoke of the weather, that favourite topic of all English people, when they want something to say. In truth the morning was beautiful enough to call forth admiration from the most unobserving. The dew yet glittered upon the hedge-row blossoms, that threw out their fragrance as we passed; the birds were pluming their wings, and pouring forth their matin song of joy and liberty! All Nature was smiling, and the eye that can look

coldly on such a scene, should for ever be condemned to the smoke and sameness of a crowded city, nor profane the charms of nature by its unworthy gaze!

When we had discussed the weather, I ventured to enquire "if she knew much of the master of Fairlight?"

"Nothing personally," she replied, "and little by report, but that little was unfavorable. She dreaded the interview, yet *must* see him, though her's was a painful errand."

"He may not be so unpleasant a person as report has represented him, madam," replied I; "at least for your sake we will hope he is not."

My horse was a fleet one, and accustomed to the country roads, and in less than an hour I pointed out the white turrets of Fairlight house to my companion, rising amid a beautiful cluster of trees. In a few minutes more,

I drew my horse up at a small wicket gate.

“That path, madam,” said I, “will lead you across the park and lawn to the mansion, proceed straight forwards, and your road is clear.”

Hastily assisting my companion with her child out of the gig, I hardly stayed to hear the expression of thanks breathed from the sweetest pair of lips I thought I had ever beheld. Dashing down a lane a few paces further, I gained the back of the premises, and was in the dining-room of Fairlight house before the young matron, for such I judged her to be with her little charge, (whose tiny footsteps seemed but ill to keep pace with his mother's anxiety of mind as she gently led him along,) had entered the shrubbery conducting to the lawn. My directions were promptly given, and when the hall bell rang,

and a female voice enquired of old Steady the Butler "Is Colonel Belville at home" an answer was given in the affirmative, and the lady was shewn into the little breakfast parlour, that acted both as my morning room and library. Refreshments were carried in, with Colonel Belville's compliments, and he would attend her immediately.

Changing my travelling dress as quickly as might be though I fear I did pay a little extra attention to the tie of the cravat, and the et ceteras of the toilet; in a short time I stood before her.

When I opened the door of the library, she had risen, and was standing as if awaiting my approach; one hand, of delicate symmetry and whiteness, leaned on the chimney-piece supporting a cheek whose hectic flush told the emotions that were agitating her bosom, while in the other she held an open paper. The

little urchin was playing on the hearth rug at her feet. "She is lovely," was the thought that passed across my mind as I entered and advanced into the room.

Starting from the reverie in which it seemed she had been plunged, with evident surprise she demanded, "if she saw the master of Fairlight?" With a degree of aristocratical pride for which I afterwards cursed myself, I answered, "I was the unworthy representative of that ancient house." Laying the paper on the table before which I stood, with the most taper finger I had ever beheld, it might have served the sculptor for a model of Venus' self, she pointed to a blank space in a list of names,

"*Your* signature, Colonel Belville, is only wanting to complete the list. Will you refuse to an anxious wife what she has travelled so far to obtain? It will make up the four-fifths the law requires." Her voice faltered, and she paused for my reply.

The feelings of that moment may I never know again! With a cheek crimsoned by shame at my former refusal, and a hand almost nerveless from emotion, I subscribed *Charles Belville* to the certificate. Oh, woman! how strong art thou in thy weakness! what no argument of man's lip could have forced me to do, one little word—one persuasive glance from thee obtained.

“Heaven bless you, sir,” said Mrs. Simpson, for it was she, “Heaven bless you as I do now! (and Heaven *did* bless me in the “still small voice” of an approving conscience,) “you have restored a father to his family, and an industrious member of society to the paths of honest industry. You know, Colonel Belville, Simpson had no creditors of his own, but false friends led him into difficulties which—”

“Say no more, Mrs. Simpson,” said I, “say no more; you have this day taught

me a lesson—given me an insight into the character of woman—which I can never forget.”

From that time Simpson has been my most trusted friend.

CHRONICLE SEVENTH.

THE FIRST BRIEF.

BOOK I.

L 5

A slight sketch under the same title, being a mere outline of the following tale, furnished by the pen of the same author, though under a fictitious signature, appeared about seven years ago, in one of the popular periodicals of the day.

This circumstance it is deemed proper to notice here, in order to divert the mind of the reader of any idea of plagiarism, which might otherwise be laid to the writer's charge.

THE FIRST BRIEF.

CHAPTER I.

"Dost thou so hunger for my empty chair,
That thou wilt needs invest thee with mine honors
Before thy hour be ripe?"

SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY IV.

"MARIA, I am dying."

"Say not so! say not so!" exclaimed the daughter clasping the old man's feverish, withered hand in hers. "The cordial you have taken will soon relieve you."

"Oh!" cried the invalid, "it burns! it burns!—great Heaven! I am poisoned."

"Hush!" exclaimed the girl casting her dark flashing eyes fearfully round the room. "Speak not so—the fever troubles you—hush! hush! sleep—oh! sleep, my father."

"The sleep of death," moaned the sufferer. "I am poisoned, I feel it at my heart," continued the old man writhing in agony. "Have you sent for the Surgeon?"

"I have, I have!" replied the other, looking once more round the lofty apartment.

"I did not see you leave the room, Maria," said the suffering father, turning his eyes towards her with a ghastly stare.

"The fever disturbs you, try to sleep."

The old man turned with fretful restlessness on the pillows his daughters hand had arranged, his breast still panted with unsubdued agony, and his hollow eyes although fixed on vacancy were bright even to wildness.

It was a lofty gothic chamber. The windows were high and narrow, and rattled with the

fierce gusts of a stormy November night. The flames of the candles flickered and burned darkly in the room, their dim light giving gloomy effect to the sombre vastness of the room, while the oak-panelled walls, the vaulted roof and the helpless aspect of the grey-haired man, who lay extended upon the cushioned couch, realized a melancholy picture of the stern law of all mortal possessions, "they shall pass away."

Yet the picture was relieved by an object as lovely as ever inspired an artist's pencil, or graced a courtly hall. Maria de Courcy sat on a low ottoman by her father's side. The dark eyes and noble features of a long Norman line, gave a proud grace to a beauty more dazzling perhaps than attractive;—yet she *was* beautiful, and eminently so—it was a beauty to admire—to worship perhaps, but not to love; the meek dependance that lurks in the softness of woman's glance, the calm gentleness of

expression, which seems to seek as it were for some object for virtue and love to rest upon, were unknown to the young Heiress of Lynwood—and the perfect symmetry of her person, graceful and striking as it was, served rather to give support to the haughtiness of her aspect, than to endear the feelings which that aspect created.

The storm encreased ; the aged sufferer's moans became louder and more frequent ; his white lips quivered convulsively, and his wild eyes were fixed fearfully on his child. She took one of his half clenched hands in hers and bent over it. The dark hair fell in clusters over her face,—her eyes refused to encounter her father's dying look ; but she wept not.

“Maria,” groaned De Courcy in a feebler tone, will the Surgeon never come ?”

“He will soon be here,” whispered the daughter, without raising her head.

“My brain is on fire, I am poisoned—

poisoned, Maria ! where is Morris, and the rest of the servants ; where are they all ? no one comes to help me !”

“ *I am with you, dear father,*” whispered his daughter.

The old man drew her to his bosom, and kissed her cold white brow, then fell back on the pillow exhausted.

But the agony of expiring nature refused him repose, and Maria at length summoned the domestics ; briefly informing them in whispers, that her father had a sudden relapse of the attack he had before suffered from, but that she thought it would soon pass away. The old butler hung over his master, supported his head, and hurriedly enquired why no one had been sent for Mr. Hartley, the village Surgeon ? No answer was returned, but in an instant two of the servants left the room, and the clatter of horses’ hoofs on the paved court

under the window, shewed that they had ridden off on a hasty errand.

In about half an hour the Surgeon arrived ; —but ere then the “ Squire of Lynwood ” lay a corpse in his ancestral hall !

The confusion in the house was extreme.—The frequent indisposition of their master had not been unknown to the servants, but no one had anticipated that death was so near, and his fearful agonies as they all stood around him had increased the stunning effect which the sudden event had occasioned.

Kind, warm-hearted and generous, Walter de Courcy was looked up to by his servants with respect little short of idolatry. Yet if to his dependants he was open-handed, and to his friends sincere, his daughter had ever found his very affection to be bondage. Losing her mother at her birth, his love for the pledge she had left him, his only child, the heiress of his

lands and ancient name had unknown to himself given a sternness to his treatment of the proud-hearted girl, which a spirit impatient of control naturally rebelled against. The old father forgot the feelings of the woman in his love for the child—he pursued a course towards her which his heart told him was the best for him to pursue, and hence it happened that indulgent to all the world, he was tyrannical to her he loved the best.

The storm without raged to fury 'till the old building shook again. The night was so dreadful, and the hour so late, that the village surgeon requested to be allowed to sleep at the mansion-house, his horse moreover being exhausted by the rapid pace at which he had ridden, lay panting in the stable unable to move. The house-keeper, notwithstanding her agitation and the multiform duties which the occasion required, was not unmindful of the hospitality which her late master had held

sacred as a religious creed, and ordered refreshments and a chamber to be prepared.

It was then when the house was partially tranquil, when the body had been removed to the room which in life De Courcy had occupied, and most of the servants had retired to rest, that the old Butler came to enquire what had been the cause of his master's sudden death? The Surgeon could not tell. He had seen the old Squire a few days previous; he was then in declining health, but there were no symptoms which could indicate in any way the near approach of dissolution. He had not been sent for during the intervening days, and had even heard that his patient was convalescent.

The Butler corroborated the last statement; — his master that day had taken an airing in his carriage, having gone with his daughter to witness a neighbouring hunting field. Nay more, during the early part of the evening he

had been in excellent spirits, and there was not one in the house who did not hope that he was no longer an invalid.

The Surgeon became more interested in the matter, and closely examined the Butler on the symptoms which he had observed in his master before his death. The servant answered all, and perceiving the deep attention of his listener, described what he had seen with minuteness. The medical man became gradually more and more absorbed in thought, and abruptly asked if any one had been with his master during the evening? The Butler answered "No one but his daughter."

Next morning, before any of the domestics (except those who had sat up with the body) were stirring, the Surgeon arose and sought the chamber where it lay. He was proceeding to examine it more minutely, and to interrogate the attendants, when a long narrow door in the gothic wainscoting slowly opened, and

Maria de Courcy entered. She was pale as marble, and her dark though dimmed eyes looked as if sleep had been a stranger to them. Approaching the Surgeon, who regarded her with a look of momentary embarrassment, she demanded in a voice which trembled with ill subdued anger, by what authority he busied himself about one who was now beyond the reach of mortal aid?

"Your respected father," stammered the Surgeon, "died so suddenly—pardon me, but my wish—perhaps my *duty* as a medical man prompts me to ascertain if possible the real nature of his malady."

"He is dead!" replied Maria in a mournful tone. "My father's illness, whatever it was, shall be no subject for the idle curiosity of those who canvass it to gratify themselves. You were sent for to aid the living—your business does not lie with the dead."

Mr. Hartley bowed,

"My house is at your disposal," continued the now orphan daughter of De Courcy; "my servants will obey you. I wish not to offend one for whom my father entertained regard;—but this chamber, sir, I trust your own feelings will forgive me for calling sacred. I desire no stranger to intrude here. Pardon me that I say so—my melancholy situation must be my excuse."

The Surgeon stood before the young Heiress like a culprit. He was abashed, even overawed; but the dark thoughts which had been aroused in his mind were not extinguished. He muttered a confused apology for having intruded; and left the room.

The day of the funeral drew near. The Steward, who superintended the arrangements, had hastened them. The proud Heiress so ordered it—for whispers had spread abroad. The Coroner was even appealed to; he refused to listen to the appeal, and the last male descendant

of the line of De Courcy was laid in the resting place of his fathers.

But rumours increased. The friends of the family became incensed, and unknown to the Heiress, the body at their request was exhumed and examined by medical men. Poison was found in the stomach; those who had been instrumental in procuring the disinterment of the corpse were startled;—and not a few regretted their own precipitancy.

The Coroner now could no longer refuse to hold an inquest;—servants were examined—the case became darker, the jury, consisting chiefly of the tenants of the deceased, returned a cautious verdict;—but the public mind was aroused—the magistracy were compelled to pursue their enquiries—and, alas! for the boasted sympathy of woman, the ladies of the neighbourhood, taking the affair into their own hands, became indefatigable in spreading rumours which changed the lofty character of

the loveliest of their rivals—to that of a murderess and a fiend !

It was such a night as that on which old De Courcy died. The wild whoops of the wind burst in loud clamour over the mansion ; the drifting rain pattered against the long gothic windows ; the domestics covered together in the servants' hall, while their mistress sat apart and alone in the lofty chamber in which she had witnessed her father's death. She was leaning her head upon her hand, her looks were troubled, and at each louder burst of the wind she started as if for the first time she had noticed the storm.

Suddenly the sound of horses' feet was followed by a loud knocking at the outer door. Maria de Courcy arose, and a chill she knew not why fell upon her heart. She heard the dogs in the adjoining stableyard growl savagely at the noise, she clenched her small white hand as though she longed to set them on the intruders. The

knocking was repeated, hurried words were heard below, mingled with the expostulation of female voices. She rang the bell angrily ;—at that instant the door of the room opened and two men, travel-soiled, and of forbidding aspect, with a third of more respectable appearance entered the room, followed by a group of servants. Few words sufficed. The last mentioned visitor was the Under-sheriff of the county, who bore a warrant which he presented, for the apprehension of Maria de Courcy on the charge *of the wilful murder of her father!*

The accused looked as though she heard him not. Her lips quivered for an instant, and her limbs seemed sinking ; but suddenly rallying herself, she called her terror-stricken waiting woman to her side, told her to make the usual preparations for a journey, and then, in a steady voice, ordered the travelling carriage to be brought to the door.

Her orders were obeyed ; the servants mov-

ing about as if in a dream ; and having wrapped herself closely up, and drawing the ample folds of her mourning veil over her features, Maria de Courcy, attended by her trembling waiting-woman, and followed by the Under-sheriff, with a firm, proud step descended to the carriage.

CHAPTER II

THE sensation created in the west of England, by the events recorded in the preceding chapter, is not unremembered even at the present day. Public opinion was divided on the matter, but the public interest was highly aroused. By one portion the young Heiress was represented as the victim of a dreadful

conspiracy on the part of the next in succession to deprive her of her patrimony, while by another she was considered as a fiend, clothed with beauty to execute the most fearful designs. An enigma on humanity ;—a person, which the coldest might worship—a mind which the most enlightened might admire, with a heart which depravity itself would shudder at.

The investigation proceeded with rapidity ; poison was discovered in the Mansion-house, and without being in the private possession of the prisoner, it was found in a place to which she alone had ready access. The neglect on her part to call in medical assistance was also ascertained, her bearing during her father's dying moments and her objection to allow the Surgeon to examine the body, were strictly canvassed, and ere the period of the assizes arrived the belief had become almost general that Maria de Courcy was a murderess !

Her wealth commanded the best legal talent. A Barrister of first rate eminence was retained as leading Counsel; associated with a young man as junior selected by the Attorney at the assize town of—— from a slight knowledge he had of his family. It was his **FIRST BRIEF**, for Edward Murray had not been twelve months called to the bar. No subject, no situation could have so affected him; the trial of a young and lovely woman on a charge of murder, and he, the unknown, the panting aspirant for honor and for fame, was to exert his talents on her behalf! Nay more, his feelings as a man, young and ardent—his warmth of heart—and interest in the accused, gave his duty something of the character of chivalrous romance.

He laboured indefatigably—sifted the materials which the Attorney laid before him—studied the law—the evidence—the minutest

relation and details of the case, and won the praise of his senior Counsel for the industry and talent which he displayed.

Another event brought the matter closer home to him. The senior Counsel a few days before the trial was seized, on the circuit, with a fit of illness, which his medical attendant declared any mental exertion might render fatal.

The whole weight of the case was thus unexpectedly thrown upon Murray ; there was no time to obtain other Counsel, or if obtained, to instruct them. He felt that now indeed the life and reputation of his fair client was in his hands ; and that consciousness, instead of paralyzing his efforts, spurred him on to exertion, quickened his talents, and gave him an increased confidence in himself.

The Attorney was astonished at the eagle-like grasp which he took of the matter—at the

almost intuitive knowledge which he displayed in its details ;—at the subjects of investigation which he pointed out—at the impatience with which he listened to the oblique hint which struck constructively against the conviction of his client's perfect innocence ;—at the energy with which even in their professional interviews he spoke of the case ;—the triumphant refutation which he gave to points which seemed to have embarrassed the toil-worn legal purveyor—his absolute delirium of joy, when in some happy moment he seemed to have lightened his cause of every objection—and the unabated enthusiasm with which he encountered every new obstacle that arose around it. Another cause of enthusiasm was yet added to the rest. At the request of the attorney the young Counsel visited his client in prison. He had heard indeed that she was beautiful ;—he was prepared to see a lovely woman—but now,

his heart was touched and his imagination was dazzled.

She was pale ;—sorrow and suffering were written on her features ; they had subdued in some measure their natural haughtiness, and given them an expression which was deeply touching. No man could have looked upon that lovely girl as she sat lonely there, with a sword as it were suspended by a single hair above her head, without feeling an intense interest in her fate, and sympathy for her condition.

The interview increased Murray's devotion to her cause ; but was far from supporting his ideas of her innocence. On the contrary, with the quick perception of an acute and anxious mind, he foresaw that the case would present a suspicious aspect to a Jury ; and even with himself the first harbourings of doubt were soon followed by the almost certainty of her

guilt. He was disappointed that she had not been able to explain various circumstances with which he had made her acquainted—and this disappointment perhaps the more readily disposed him, not only to falter in his previous opinion, but to turn round impatiently towards the opposite extreme.

Yet he suspended no exertion, he neglected nothing which could lead to success in the cause. Whatever change his sentiments had undergone regarding the guilt or innocence of his client, towards herself his interest was unabated—Nay it was encreased.—His very suspicion of her guilt—the very conjunction of such an atrocious crime with a being so eminently beautiful, fastened upon his mind and made him anxious to prove her innocent were it only to himself. And more than that—she was dependant on his exertions for life and honour;—he it was who alone could raise her

from the dreadful abyss into which she had fallen, to the proud and stainless position she had hitherto occupied in the world ;—her fate was in his hands, and Edward Murray was not the man to desert it.

It was the eve of the trial. The room of the inn which the Counsel occupied was crowded—they had been long detained in court and dined late ; the wine circulated freely ;—mirth and hilarity ruled the hour.

Many gentlemen of the County were present, and the conversation turned upon the trial of the following day. Maria de Courcy was spoken of by the Barristers with interest and curiosity, but by the county gentlemen with concern. The topic gave uneasiness to Murray, and he early withdrew from the dinner-room.

In the solitude of his chamber he brooded over his duty to his client and himself. The eyes

of the whole bar—of one half of England were upon him—should he succeed that success was certain to carry him rapidly to the highest honours of the profession—and should he fail, too many would witness the defeat. It was an era that would put his talents to the proof—a hard but a glorious struggle—and honour and advancement were the prize of victory—And not these alone, for the nervous interest which he felt in the fate of her who with himself would be rescued or ruined;—the beauty which had dazzled his imagination, and the suffering which had touched his heart, inspired even a keener interest in the issue of that, which was to make or to mar him.

He resumed his papers and studied them again.—The hours passed quickly by, but he regarded them not;—his mind was totally absorbed, with the case to which his very destiny seemed to be united; and the

chimes of midnight had long died away in the deserted streets of the quiet little assize town of * * * ere the young Counsel gathered up his papers and retired to rest.

CHAPTER III.

THE Court was crowded in every part. Long ere the doors were opened crowds had assembled round them; the seats usually occupied by the Grand Jury were filled with ladies; gentlemen stood about in dense crowds; every alley, every nook was thronged; and although the Court-house was not of large dimensions, the grouping of so many faces, the silence,

and the anxiety evident in all, gave it an aspect most imposing.

Barristers whispered together in a low suppressed voice ; the Sheriff, who sat near to the Judge, was so absorbed that when his lordship addressed him, he scarcely heeded it ; and even the Judge himself looked as if the duty upon which he was about to enter was one that depressed him.

Murray sat silent among a knot of whisperers. The senior Counsel, who was merely able to take his seat, had already intimated with an explanation of the reason, (his recent illness,) that the management of the case would be left entirely to the Junior, and having craved the learned Judge's indulgence for this unavoidable necessity, encouraged his young coadjutor with the hope of a favorable verdict. But Murray was alone. Heaven's angels or Hell's ministers could at that moment have hardly aroused his mind to any attention be-

yond that which already engrossed it ; and the senior barrister, who saw the temper he was in, wisely forbore to continue remarks which fell idly on the ear of him he addressed.

A sudden buzz ran through the court ;—those who sat rose up simultaneously, and those who stood, strained forward to catch a glimpse of the prisoner as she was conducted to the dock.

She was pale—deadly pale, but her step was firm and graceful, and her dark eyes were burning with brightness. She was dressed in deep mourning ; her long black hair giving striking effect to her features, and her beauty a wild interest to the dreadful situation in which she stood. Bowing modestly to the Court, she seated herself on the chair which courtesy had provided for her, and awaited with seeming calmness the opening of the proceedings.

The indictment was read, and the charge was

made. The Prisoner, in a calm, firm voice which was distinctly heard in every part of the Court pleaded "not guilty."

The Counsel for the prosecution then opened the case. He began by regretting the nature of the duty which was that day assigned to him, and prayed the Jury to cast aside all personal considerations in listening to the statement which he had to make.

He alluded to the rank, youth, and beauty of the prisoner ;—but observed that these were no palliatives of crime ;—on the contrary, to unprejudiced minds they must seem to aggravate it ;—to the natural wish of all to suppose a woman—a daughter innocent—innocent of her father's death ; to the rumours industriously circulated that the present prosecution had been instituted at the instigation of the next in succession to the family lands—which he, in the course of the evidence he had to lay before them, would abundantly refute ;—to the

apparent absence of any cause for such an act as that alleged—a seeming difficulty which it was rather the province of the Jury to consider, than his to obviate ; reminding them that no one but the Almighty was a searcher of hearts, and if every crime of vast enormity was to be considered unproved until a sufficient rational cause for its perpetration was adduced, the greatest criminals would go unpunished. That here at least the heiress of her father's lands, (and without speculating upon motives he would confine himself to facts) that the high name—and hitherto spotless reputation of the prisoner would no doubt be urged in her behalf—and anticipating such an argument in her favor he readily admitted it to its fullest extent, warning the Jury, however, that it went no further than requiring the stronger evidence of guilt, and in no way extended to render guilt impossible ;—and that if a good name were such a safeguard, it would be only necessary once to

obtain it, to commit with impunity the most heinous crimes. That the evidence which he would lay before them—and upon which rather than on all that he could urge or his learned opponents plead in answer,—was that upon which they were called to judge—was clear, close, and to his conviction perfect;—that it behoved them to guard their sympathy from mere eloquence, so liable to be effective in such a cause and in conformity with their oaths in spirit and in tenor, to give a verdict according as their conscience prompted them, from the facts which they should hear;—to throw aside all considerations but the simple yea or nay, “Is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not?”

From this the Counsel proceeded to give a clear and succinct statement of the various facts which would be supported by the evidence, and which ingeniously united by him, seemed if established to leave little doubt of the prisoner's guilt.

The Court became worked up to the most breathless interest and the general conviction of all present was, that Maria de Courcy would fall a just sacrifice to the offended laws of her Country.

The first witness was called—It was William Morris the old butler who narrated the manner of his master's death.—The Counsel thoroughly convinced of the guilt of the prisoner thought fit to extend his questions as to her previous and subsequent behaviour, to the period alluded to ; —but here the Crown Advocate was at fault—The old domestic seemed glad of an opportunity of speaking in high terms of his late Master's child ;—he narrated how she had supported his head in his dying agonies, knelt by his couch, and hung over him like one distracted. Tears started to the old man's eyes as he spoke, nor was he the only one that wept. The Counsel for the prisoner declining the hint of his senior to put questions in cross-exami-

nation to the witness, suffered him without a word to be led from the box.

Jacob Hartly the Surgeon was next examined. His evidence again threw a darkened shade over the picture. He mentioned the interview in the morning with the prisoner in the chamber where the body lay—his having attended the deceased some time previous—and having been present when the corpse was exhumed and opened, and poison discovered in the stomach.

Murray now for the first time rose. He cross-examined the Surgeon with a closeness which embarrassed him ;—made him reluctantly confess that his desire to examine the body had not been occasioned from any *professional* doubts—any intuitive medical knowledge (as he had almost hinted in his first deposition) but was the result of gossip heard among the servants ;—that when he visited Lynwood, and saw that Mr. De Courcy was dead, he had no

suspicion of any thing criminary of the prisoner, and he would have left the house with the same impression, but for a conversation with Morris the butler ;—that his entrance into the chamber where the body lay had been abrupt and unannounced, and might perhaps justify his sudden ejection. The man became embarrassed from the slight embellishment which he had given to the facts, upon which the young Counsel had pounced like an eagle—his answers were confused, sometimes even contradictory, and the Village Surgeon left the witness box crest-fallen.

Other medical men were called who had examined the body ;—the servants also gave evidence that no medical advice had been sent for, or themselves apprised of the sudden illness of the deceased, until within a few moments of his dissolution.

Murray pursued the same course with these—he made them speak highly of the kindness

and affection of the prisoner, which they did with great willingness—of her agitation during her father's dying moments which might have unfitted her from attending to his wishes, or perhaps might have made her forget that she had not attended to them;—the young Barrister contended every inch of ground, but in spite of all this, the stubborn array of little facts had sunk into the minds of the Jury, and their impression was still that the prisoner was *guilty*.

The poison found in the house—the long evening spent alone by the deceased and his daughter;—these and some expressions which had escaped the lips of De Courcy himself in his death agonies, wove a net as it were around the prisoner, which although weak in separate parts as a whole was strong.

The Counsel for the prosecution intimated that he had concluded his case.

Edward Murray rose for the defence. The

Court, attentive as it had been before, was hushed into perfect silence now ; the slightest sound was distinctly heard ;—Judge, Jury and auditors listened with breathless interest ;—never had an orator a more attentive audience.

He commenced in a calm, low voice—yet every syllable was heard. For a moment or two he seemed oppressed with the vast responsibility of his position ;—he was as pale as the prisoner herself, and his hand, as he grasped his papers, trembled convulsively. But this soon wore away. His fine deep toned voice rose like music above the stillness, and its thrilling accents, (for never was a public speaker more worked up to interest in the cause he had to plead,) aroused the minds of all who heard it to yet deeper attention.

Presently his eye grew bright and his words flowed freely with powerful and impassioned eloquence—it was the eloquence of nature—for Edward Murray burst through the logical

arrangement which in his closet he had given the defence ;—and at once started aside from the cold details of argument, and presented a vivid picture of the dreadful and heart-crushing situation of the prisoner at the bar. He reminded the Jury of her former position in life—what it had been but a few short weeks ago—in the enjoyment of every luxury to which wealth could minister ;— the pride of rank—the homage paid to beauty—the heiress of a princely estate—the rival of the noblest and the fairest in the land !—What was she now ? If guilty, her sufferings, acute as they were, were just,—but if innocent, how cruel was her doom !

And innocent he would prove to them *she was* !—aye, to all around him, to the most dull, to the most heartless, he would prove that *she was innocent*.

“ But that indeed had almost been already proved by the miserable failure to convict her as guilty. She had lost her father, and ere

the shock of that bereavement had subsided, she had been hurried away from the comforts of her paternal home to a common jail, on the charge of having murdered him !

And where were the grounds for such a charge?—Poison it was affirmed had been found in the stomach of the deceased, it was affirmed he had been poisoned. For his own part he laid as much weight in the circumstance of poison having been found in the house, as on the declarations of the wretched blunderers, who had that day in the eyes of their countrymen, equivocated, shuffled, and evaded in testimonies given under the sanction of their oaths. What reliance was to be placed on the evidence of men who not only contradicted themselves, but contradicted one another? If poison was really found in the stomach of the deceased, there was nothing extraordinary in having found it also in his residence ; but it was reasoning too laxly to

infer that because there was poison in the Mansion-house, these learned gentlemen must be right in assuming that there was poison also in the stomach of the deceased. What country house was there in England which might not have, and had not had sometimes poison within its walls? it was the common and careless resource of servants, particularly country servants, for the destruction of noxious animals infesting the farm yard, or the granary. And in this case the poison found at Lynwood in all probability had lain there for years, as no evidence had been adduced to show when it was procured, and far less that it had ever been procured by the prisoner. Nay it was not even found in her possession, and if as was alleged it was discovered in a place to which she had ready access, what stronger proof could there be of her innocence, seeing that she suffered it to remain there? he might add of her ignorance

of it also, as no one, innocent or guilty, would willingly allow such a fatal drug to lie carelessly within their walls.

From this the young Barrister proceeded to combat those particulars of the prisoner's conduct immediately before, and for some time after her father's death; which had created an evident prejudice against her innocence. And here it was that Edward Murray exerted his greatest skill. Aware of the effect which these had produced, aware also of their insignificance when considered singly, isolated and simply in its own relation—he brought them as it were into light, attacked them in detail, and insensibly undermined the succession of circumstances upon which their impression of the prisoner's guilt was secretly founded. Few men can tell the real cause of their conviction; reason when most purely exerted is often overturned by a feeling which we cannot analyze,

and it is the perfection of oratory to dive into those secret springs which influence the judgment often more than the most perfect argument, and divert their course ere they rush into a stream. It was here that Murray excelled. Nature fought half his battle for him, for he gave up the reins to her. The minds of his audience responded to the spirited appeal which he made to them—to the exquisite portraiture of their own lurking thoughts, to his industrious uncoiling of the hazy web which had been cast around the case ;—to his faithful mirroring of their own impressions, and his scornful refutation of those conclusions to which their minds had thus arrived. The looks of the auditors brightened ;—a weight seemed lifted from every heart, and when the Counsel sat down, a suppressed buzz of admiration ran through the Court.

But the Judge although he complimented the

young Barrister's eloquence had not been influenced by it. He summed up the evidence calmly, and lucidly ; placed once more in naked array the close grouping of facts, and as if to shew more fully that he had not been affected by the general impression which the young Counsel had created, he dwelt at some length on certain parts of the evidence which bore hard on the prisoner, and the absence of any witnesses of her own to refute the more marked and striking circumstances which bore against herself. The perfect silence as to how the poison had been taken or administered—for poison he ruled had been incontestibly proved to have occasioned Mr. De Courcy's death, and it was abundantly evident that it had not been taken by him, with a view to self-destruction. He commented on the long evening they had passed together—her evident neglect or disinclination to send for medical assistance, or

apprise the servants of their master's situation, and recapitulated the mysterious murmurs which the old man had uttered ere death sealed his lips for ever.

Again the feelings of the audience wavered, and the Jury retired to consider their verdict.

•

CHAPTER IV.

THERE was a breathless pause in the crowded Court, as after an hour's deliberation the foreman of the Jury in the usual form pronounced "*not guilty.*" A flush of haughty triumph passed over the pale features of the statue-like girl who stood at the bar, as she bowed formally to the spectators, and was conducted from the Court.

The young advocate was warmly congratulated by his fellow Barristers on the masterly and effective defence he had made, and certain, and rapid advancement in his profession was prognosticated. But Murray was silent, and abstracted and merely answered in the terms which courtesy required;—the Court was rising and he suddenly separated himself from his companions.

He proceeded to the little country inn, to which Maria had retired on quitting the Court. It was already twilight, and she was preparing to depart with a matron friend, who had come to conduct her home. Aye home! to that very spot which was now bereft of its venerable master;—to those domains which now devolved on her who had been accused of hastening their possession by the deepest of crimes. A thrill of horror ran through the bosom of Murray, as he gazed on the beautiful form before him, and thought what her fate, but for

his eloquence might that day have been. He shuddered as he took her offered hand, and received in silence the warm expressions of gratitude, poured from the most seducing lips he had ever listened to; but he felt as he held the cold white fingers within his own, that there was a bond of union between their hearts, which nature itself refused to break. Their words of parting, (for the interview was short,) were not uttered in the cold tones of courtesy—it was not the farewell between Counsel and Client perhaps never to meet again;—but an epoch in both their lives;—to Maria indeed a fearful one, and to the other, one which had too many exciting reminiscences ever to be effaced from his heart.

Edward Murray led the young Heiress to her carriage, and left her with a promise to visit Lynwood the following day.

He returned to the inn where the Counsel assembled. At the dinner table that evening one

topic alone formed the theme of conversation—the extreme beauty and apparent innocence of the prisoner. Murray was again warmly congratulated on the able defence he had made;—the young Counsel present forgot their rivalry, and the old Barristers their jealousy, in united commendation of the talent and enthusiasm which had borne him on to triumph. But Murray was moody and abstracted—his heart and soul were already surrendered to the lovely being whom he had that day rescued from ignominy and death;—and although reason shrank from contemplating the surrender he was making and already had made, it still threw sufficient light over the course upon which he seemed to be entering, to shew him it was a fearful one.

He strove to shake off the thoughts which depressed him. He drank deeply—his laugh was the loudest, but had a wildness occasionally

in it which startled those around him. The sudden change in his manner was remarked by all, but it was imputed to the great mental exertion he had undergone, and the excitement occasioned by hilarity and wine.

Next morning Murray proceeded to Lynwood. It was a cheerful day, and his heart, he knew not why, was lighter than before. He thought he would take a hasty leave of his fair client—he would see her next time he went that circuit—he had, no doubt, a claim upon her gratitude and friendship, and it was one which he was not disposed to forego;—and yet Edward Murray, almost unknown to himself, wished that they might not merely part as friends. Nor would perhaps his friendship have prompted him to rejoice at the contemplation of her union with another, whoever that other might have been.

Amid these wavering feelings her guilt, un-

convicted as it was, hung like a dark cloud over the visions his ardent heart pourtrayed. She *might* indeed be innocent, but he *dreaded* she *was guilty*, and if guilty how dreadful was her crime !

He reached Lynwood, and once more found himself in her presence. She was still pale, and her looks had lost much of their wonted haughtiness, but the dark, burning eye, the proudly formed lips, still animated the countenance, and her step was as stately as though it had never trod a prison floor.

For a moment Murray forgot she had been accused of crime. He saw her the mistress of a princely mansion, with servants at her command, and magnificence around her ; he saw a young woman with more beauty and dignity than is often the lot of her sex ; he met a kind greeting, but calm and lady-like ; again Murray felt himself to be an unknown and friendless

Barrister and Maria de Courcy the heiress of Lynwood.

But the manner of meeting even if of ice, when hearts are warm, will thaw away. They sat together, and neither of them could forget how different at that hour yesterday their situation had been. It seemed to have flashed simultaneously on both ;—Maria's dark eyes looked softer, and a yet paler hue fell upon her features, while Murray looked again with a throbbing heart upon the lovely being whom his eloquence had saved.

Their words grew softer and their tones of another kind, than the cold courtesies of the world demand. The proud Beauty was touched ; in spite of the dreadful situation in which she had been placed she had looked with admiration on the young Barrister who had been her enthusiastic champion ;—and now when she saw that she had inspired in his bosom the

interest dearest to woman's own—her feelings responded to his, and Edward Murray felt he was loved again.

“ I leave to-morrow for * * * *, Miss de Courcy,” said Murray, after a lingering visit ; “ it is the next assize town on the circuit. In six months I shall be here again.”

“ Six months !—to morrow !” repeated Maria looking reproachfully towards him, “ *must* you go to-morrow ?”

“ I am not retained on any particular cause there,” observed Murray, “ but it is necessary for young Barristers to appear at the various towns on their circuit whether we are employed or not—and yet—”

“ Well.”

“ Perhaps—if—”

“ Well—why do you hesitate ?”

“ I could wish my duty did not call me hence.”

"But your duty to leave weighs more with you than your inclination to remain?"

"I did not say *that*."

"Then you promise you will *not* go?"

The speaker fixed her dark eyes upon Murray; they were lighted up with a lustre which gave them a new expression—it was warm and woman-like—the ice of pride was broken, and the idea of separation, short as had been their acquaintanceship, made Maria de Courcy look like a suppliant to the man she loved.

Murray's head grew dizzy. Passion needed no prompting in his warm and enthusiastic nature; he was already the slave of the fair sorceress, and gave the promise she required. But he exacted another in return. He declared his love in fervent terms, and in a manner which shewed he spoke from the sudden impulses of an impassioned heart. It was no

time to play the prude, and Maria de Courcy acknowledged that the heart he worshipped was already his.

That short hour sealed the destiny of Murray.

Judge and Counsel met at * * * *, but the young Barrister, to the surprise of his legal brethren, was not among them. Already had the fame of his successful eloquence preceded his steps, and Briefs were waiting for him at that and other towns on the circuit; but he neither appeared nor gave any intimation of the cause of his absence.

Day after day saw him at Lynwood. His passion increased by the fascination of the society of the lovely woman who was now his affianced bride; and that society, enhanced as it was by beauty and charms of mind, rendered dearer to him by the confiding communion of love.

Weeks, months rolled on ; Edward Murray forgot friends—his profession—prospects ; all were abandoned even in thought. His passion influenced him like a spell ; he obeyed an impulse which he could neither analyze nor control ;—the fever of love had laid prostrate his very reason ;—his letters remained unanswered, —often unopened ;—the anxious enquiries of relatives were unheeded ; he abandoned himself solely to the feelings which seemed to have changed his nature, and shut his eyes to all the world.

He still nominally resided in the small assize town that had been the scene of his triumph, but his days were spent at Lynwood. Maria was deserted by the world, and Murray deserted the world for her.

It was their marriage eve ; Spring was now reaching into Summer, and the beautiful grounds of Lynwood were clothed in their

richest verdure. The day had been a lovely one, and the lovers walked out together. The sun was sinking—there was not a breath of wind stirring. They reached a remote part of the grounds ; and sat down to enjoy the sweet serenity of the hour. The tall pines that rose around them gave a dark shadow to the spot—the oaks too that clustered beyond were high and venerable—there was solemnity in the silent scenery which both felt, although neither expressed it.

“ To-morrow,” whispered Murray, “ with us the name of lovers will be changed to that which expresses a dearer tie.”

“ The name of lover seems to me as dear as that of husband—or kindred—”

The fair speaker paused : the last word awakened a thought that paralyzed her tongue. It fell coldly too on Murray's ear—for his heart told him the associations it had created

in her own. Maria remained silent for a moment or two.

“There is a darker shadow thrown upon this place,” said Murray, “and yet the sun cannot be set.”

Maria looked fearfully around her.

“Yes,” said she, almost with a shudder, “it is darker since I spoke.”

“Perhaps it is only imagination after all,” rejoined Murray. “Dear Maria, do not let a passing cloud make us melancholy.”

“Hark !” replied his companion, with a slight shudder, as a low moaning sound of wind came through the wood around them, and died slowly away. The leaves that had hitherto hung drooping in the calm silence trembled in the up-rising breeze, the tops of the tall trees moved slowly—and the darkness of the sky increased.

“A storm is coming on,” said Murray,

“ dearest ! let us leave this place and return to the house.”

Maria arose and took his arm in silence. As they proceeded, the clouds, which the trees had hidden from them, were seen rolling as it were together under the blue sky which they were rapidly hiding, and a few heavy drops of rain gave additional indication of the nearer approach of the storm.

They had nearly a mile to walk. The grounds were extensive and they had wandered to a remote part of them. They hurried on, but long ere they reached the house, the wind moaned more shrilly in the sultry air, and several peals of thunder, each louder and apparently nearer than the other, warned them that the storm had commenced.

It increased fearfully. The lightning flashed, in quick succession—the rain fell in torrents—

and the sudden gusts of wind made the tall pine-woods rock again.

At length they reached the house. The servants met them in alarm; some on the lawn and others in the portico, for the storm had made them anxious for their safety.

“It is a dreadful storm,” exclaimed the old Butler to his mistress as she passed through the hall. “There has not been such a one since the night my poor master died.”

Maria’s white lips quivered, and still leaning on Murray’s arm she passed into the large gothic chamber already mentioned.

At that moment a peal burst over the house until the building shook again; a flash of lightning glared into the room, and seemed to linger on the portrait of De Courcy which hung suspended on the wall;—the eyes—the

expression seemed for a moment lighted up to animation. His daughter regarded it for an instant, uttered a wild shriek, and, ere her lover could prevent it, fell senseless on the floor !

CHAPTER V.

THE storm of the preceding evening had died away, and the morning sun shone beautifully. The wet forest leaves were glittering, and the birds singing merrily amid the thick groves of Lynwood—the white clouds floated calmly on the blue ether—and all was bright and peaceful again.

Two carriages drove from the mansion-

house. Groups of tenantry and many a peasant girl in her holiday dress thronged the avenue that led to the church, to catch a passing glimpse of their young mistress, the lovely Heiress of many a broad acre—the Bride whose Father died scarce six months ago—the Daughter who had been accused of being his Murderess!

Flowers were strewed along her path—hats were raised and the tribute of the humble was paid. But there were eyes that looked upon her with an interest that told more of suspicion than of cordial love; there were furtive glances which betrayed something like horror, and whispers which it was well the dark-eyed beauty heard not.

The carriages drove on, Maria de Courcy little recked what the sentiments of her dependants were, for other thoughts were then troubling her mind.

They reached the church-yard. That too

was crowded—but a gap, whether from accident or by design, was made between the path she had to pass through and the family vault of De Courcy. There it was, marked out by its lofty monument carved with armorial bearings, and Maria de Courcy had to pass over the very spot under which her father's ashes lay. She shuddered and leaned heavily on the arm of her escort, an elderly gentleman, a neighbouring country Squire, who had been one of her father's nearest friends. He noticed her agitation.

“ You are ill, Miss de Courcy ?” said he.

“ No no,” answered the affianced Bride with a hasty and gasping effort. “ I am quite well now—the storm of last night unnerved me.”

They passed on—and the Bridal party entered the church. Here again she had to encounter many a familiar face and many a curious glance. Most of the neighbouring

families had come hither to steal a last look at their former acquaintance the beautiful and proud heiress of De Courcy; to see her, whose name had been a bye-word in the mouths of every one, and who of late had lived the life of a recluse,—one who had fallen, if not into heinous crime, at least under the ban of a fearful suspicion, and who now, by a premature marriage, had renewed rumours which the charitable had been disposed to forget.

Maria knew well the motives which brought so many present, and the feelings with which she was regarded by the majority of those around her. But this, instead of depressing, served rather to assist in rallying her spirits;—she passed along the aisle with her usual firm proud step, and when she met her bridegroom at the altar, cast around her a hasty but haughty look of triumph. It was a woman's revenge,—for she felt that there was not a female present who did not admire the graceful

form, and handsome features of him who was about to become her husband.

The ceremony began. Involuntary the Bride's eye fell upon a marble monument near the altar. It had been raised to the memory of an ancestor of her house ; a rudely sculptured device of a warrior surmounted it, and immediately beneath was another and smaller tablet,—the white unsullied marble and dark letters, shewing it had been newly erected. Her eyes became rivetted, for on that tablet she read her *father's name*. Yes ! there it stood, confronting her, a “writing on the wall,” which rose before her like reproach ;—her eyes grew dim,—the marble figure seemed to frown,—another moment and Maria de Courcy would have fallen senseless at the altar's foot.

But the hundred eyes around re-nerved her ; the blood rushed to her temples ; but that burning blush was at the thought of crouching to the venomed glances of those whom she despised ;

she gave the responses the ceremony required in a clear calm tone ; her pride was stung :—at that moment Maria would have encountered death rather than have betrayed a weakness for others to exult over, and canvass as evidence of her guilt.

The sun shone brightly through the painted windows of the little village church, yet a cold gloom was felt, if not cast upon the scene. The clergyman's voice rose strongly in the silence,—or seemed to do so then,—the looks of all around were fixed upon the Bride, and him who stood beside her. Murray looked pale, and during the ceremony was perceptibly agitated ;—he took her hand, and pronounced the vow that bound him her's for ever ;—his eye glanced fondly upon his lovely bride, but deep thought lingered on his brow, and his manner betrayed that errant thoughts were struggling in his mind.

The Priest pronounced the nuptial bene-

diction, and the marriage party quitted the church. But no cordial look smiled kindly upon them; they passed through the aisle amid pews, filled as it were with statues. They reached the church-yard, — the hats of the peasantry were again raised, but the same cold, unbroken silence continued;—and without a single cheer, without a blessing, or a prayer, (save those of the officiating priest,) Maria de Courcy drove from the church which her ancestor had erected,—a heavy-hearted, though wedded Wife.

END OF VOL. II.

T. C. Newby Printer, Angel Hill, Bury.

CHRONICLES OF LIFE,

BY

MRS. CORNWELL BARON WILSON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

T. & W. BOONE, 29, NEW BOND STREET.

1840.

T. C. Newby, Printer, Angel Hill, Bury.

THE FIRST BRIEF.

BOOK II.

VOL. III.

B

THE FIRST BRIEF.

CHAPTER I.

" They are lost
In chase of fancied happiness, still woo'd
But never won."

COWPER.

It had been a Court day, and the Opera House was crowded ; youth, beauty, rank, and fashion shone like gems within its circle, and every eye was turned that night less on the stage than on the display of elegance that graced the surrounding boxes. The Prince was present, and sat in a conspicuous situation conversing with one of the loveliest and most aristocratical

looking women in that brilliant throng. Their discourse appeared animated, and the dark eyes of the lady flashed with all the triumph of conquest and loveliness. At the back of the box, in a pensive attitude, stood a young man of gentlemanly aspect, evidently watching the conversation with eyes of restless jealousy. His pale features were stamped with melancholy, and his whole demeanor betrayed sadness and suffering. It was Maria and her husband !

Two years had cast no shadow on the beautiful Heiress of Lynwood. The full dark eyes sparkled as of yore, the rich dark hair had not lost a single tress, the features had all their wonted beauty, and the finely moulded figure in ripened womanhood was even more perfect than before. There were others who filled up the group in that almost regal box. Jewelled dames, and fashionable men ;— Beauty and Royalty had their satellites around

them—and Envy's eye was active, although its tongue was mute.

Henry Morland had been invited to the box by a smile from the fair queen of the night. A smile turned on him even when the Prince was addressing her—for all Maria's conquests were haughtily acquired. Morland had acknowledged the signal, and now stood near her. He was a young man of good estate and family, handsome, accomplished, and disposed to love. He had been a college-companion of Murray's, had met him lately in London society, and was one of the too numerous attachés of his fascinating wife.

The Opera proceeded. Many an eye was directed to the box where Maria sat, and many an enquiry made, as to who the lady was, who had captivated the Prince? But few could answer this. Since his marriage Murray had chiefly lived abroad, he had retired from his

profession, his name was not an uncommon one, his family but little known, and the strange accusation which had once engrossed the public mind, was, except in the county of * * * * forgotten. Maria had not long begun her career in the circles of London life, but already it had been a triumphant one. Her great beauty and brilliant qualities of mind made her universally admired, while her wealth commanded splendour, and her disposition hurried her into society. To-night was the proudest of all her conquests, and never did she look more worthy of success. The keenest feelings of woman's nature, the desire of admiration, the joy of having distanced a hundred rivals, and the satisfaction of knowing that she was envied by those who condemned her, gave her looks an animation which seemed to repay with covert scorn the censure which she dared.

The Prince took his leave, and Morland sat

in the place which he had occupied—Maria's smile was now more genial—and her dark eyes had a happier brightness than when she had listened or spoken to her royal admirer ; Morland's heart throbbed—there were many gay men around him who envied his position and his triumph was almost as great as Maria's had been.

Still the passionate music rose in thrilling sounds over the scene—still the sweet tones of love mingled with the lavish harmony that filled the house—and still the vivid impressions of wild Italian romance continued to banish all thoughts but those akin to it. Maria's words grew softer, and her looks seemed different, she appeared to increase in beauty as well as love Morland's eyes grew dim ; at that moment he could have worshipped her.

The curtain fell, and the buzz of conversation was again heard in the crowded box. As Morland still spoke with Maria, he saw that

he himself was observed with much attention by a young girl who sat near him. At first he did not regard it, but having several times met the same quiet earnest glance of her soft blue eyes, he returned the look in a manner which enabled him without giving offence to observe her own appearance. She was plain—if a simple dress, and features remarkable for no eminent beauty, merited the term. Yet her looks were pleasing, out-dazzled as they were by those of Maria; they had a gentleness of their own, which without striking the imagination, appeared in unison with qualities that are dearest to the heart. She was neat, graceful and ladylike. Young too—almost girlish—but there was a calmness in her air which atoned for the more perfect development of the beauty of womanhood. Her eyes would wander restlessly over the house, but still returned to Morland. He was puzzled;—it seemed as if the features were not unfamiliar to him; but,

whether the likeness remembered was to some family which he knew or to the lady herself, he was at a loss to conjecture. Once or twice their eyes met; she withdrew hers without a blush; but with a look that had sadness in it.

The Opera was not yet concluded, the curtain rose again and the last scene commenced. It was a highly popular piece and commanded attention from all parts of the house. Every eye was now fixed upon the stage, and every ear drank in the exquisite melody which seemed as it were to linger on the senses while it touched the heart.

Maria, like the rest of the audience, was engrossed by the scene. Morland also felt it, but his mind was at that moment agitated with other feelings, leaving little space for sympathy with those of the drama. He looked towards the young girl again. Her eyes were still bent upon him, but he saw as she removed them and looked towards the

stage that a tear was glistening there. It might have been the effect of the music—for many a soft eye around him was dimmed; but the mournful look with which she turned her head away, the seeming disregard of having been so often detected glancing towards him—and something also which he could not analyze but which interested him in her expression, aroused his curiosity to a degree which effectually removed his attention from all else passing around him.

Maria was the first to notice his abstracted manner. She did not rally him upon it, but one soft glance from her passionate eyes recalled his wandering senses, and once more made him have no other thought but for her.

The Opera concluded, and the conversation became more unrestrained. The reproving "hush!" of amateurs in the Pit no longer assailed them; they might now speak and laugh with no other restraint than what good

breeding required. Maria turned and addressed the little Court by whom she was surrounded; her words were spoken almost at random, but no sovereign ever applied them with more intuitive skill; her silvery laugh seemed to shew that her heart was light and gratified by the homage which she received.

Her manner towards Morland had been more cordial that evening than it had ever been before. He seemed too, himself, to love her better;—hitherto he had merely shared the admiration which many felt as fervently perhaps as himself, but now he half believed he was beloved again; and blind to all the consequences of such a passion he could not chuse but bid it welcome; and he felt an intoxication of mind which deprived him of the power of examining the very emotions by which he was swayed.

The gentle pressure of Maria's gloved hand upon his arm warned him that the party was

leaving the box. He led her to her carriage—she was the first to enter, and whispered as she seated herself, “We meet to-morrow at Lady Dorville’s.”

He bowed ; the carriage was instantly filled. Once more he approached and bade her “good night,” and as the vehicle rolled away, Morland caught a glimpse in the opposite corner, of the mild blue eyes whose glances during the evening had been so often turned upon him.

CHAPTER II.

THE lofty saloons of the gay Countess of Dorville were filled with the *elite* of fashion. The bright tapers shone laughingly on many a fair girl and stately dame—on peers and statesmen, who were congregated together; and youthful cyphers who flutter the Butterflies of such scenes.—The proudest names in England's annals, and those familiar in the courtly circles

mingled there ; there was a communion in the crowd discordant as seemed its elements—it was the communion of exclusiveness—the republic of eminence—where fortune, fashion, calumny itself are as often fountains of honour as a Prince's favour, or a lofty line.

The rooms, as already remarked, were brilliantly lighted, and the gorgeous air of festivity gave it the aspect of a fairy scene. It was one of the largest assemblies which had been given that season, and never was there a fairer grouping of the noble and the beautiful of our land.

And beautiful amid beauty, and haughty amid the proud, was the dark-eyed Heiress of Lynwood. Her light, graceful step, the easy dignity of her bearing, and exquisite symmetry of figure, made her the Venus of the scene. And she wore her honours well. The plume that rose over her white brow trembled as it were with the scorn of the homage she deemed

her due ; her features betrayed neither embarrassment nor exultation ; she trod the courtly hall like a beauty indeed—but like an aristocrat and an Englishwoman. Not a tittle of the attributes of her position did she surrender in return for the gratification of the passion to be admired.

Many who saw her that night declared, that with all her beauty, Murray's young wife was heartless, puritanical and cold ! But her aspect soon changed. Morland, who had that moment entered, joined her. She left the lady on whose arm she leaned, and took his. There was a willingness in the act—a cordiality in the happy smile that rose to her fine countenance, which made Morland's heart throb again.

They walked together through the mazy throng. Morland's brightened eyes told Maria that the chains of love were around him ; and the glance which her's returned seemed to re-

veal an affection, the dearest to both sexes, where it uses no art and seeks no disguise. The hours flew by, Morland seemed as if in a dream; his imagination was dazzled, his pride inflamed by the marked preference he was shewn, and his mind charmed with converse, which while it excited his admiration and gave his fancy play, seemed to deny him a thought in return. His whole soul worshipped the Goddess who inthrall'd him—his very reason was prostrated—it was the delirium of mind which only wit and beauty can create, and only the ardent and imaginative can feel.

Morland's very countenance had changed. His eyes were bright and burning but seemed unconscious of the objects around him;—there was a flush of excitement on his cheek, and something even in his tread which seemed to shew that he exulted in being the favored of the proud-browed Beauty by his side.

Yes, the hours flew by. They were happy

ones if excitement is joy—and joy is pleasure. If the wild delight which blinds the judgment, the intoxication of love which has all the frenzy of rapture, although it may want the pure pulses which give passion the aspirations and the name,—if the feeling which shuts out the past and future, and reduces existence as it were to the vivid moments which it fevers like a spell;—if these—which indeed no language can detail, but which have been felt to be understood—if these constitute *happiness*, Morland was happy.

The crowd began to lessen—comments were no longer made. Envy grew tired, and censure had long been palled; it was the dreamy lingering hour of revelry, when the heavy dawn of lassitude and ennui succeed the pleasure which can deceive us no more.

The tapers seemed to burn more palely, the stateliness of the scene had vanished—perhaps it had now more of nature in it, but

the spirits had lost the exhilaration that could give it life again. Instead of happiness to be enjoyed, the looks of many seemed rather to indicate suffering to be endured;—even the garlands although not of nature's colouring looked faded, the music fell gratingly upon the wearied ear—state and all its trainbearers gave up their posts, and those who remained, sought each other's society, if not to enjoy, at least to be dull together.

Morland still lingered with Maria. The long evening she had passed, had not impaired her beauty—she looked slightly fatigued—but her dark eyes were undimmed, and altho' paler, her features only wore another aspect of loveliness. She rose and leaning on Morland's arm sauntered slowly along the suite of rooms. They were now unobserved—in that solitude of society, where in spite of the groups around, you feel that you are alone. Morland had joined her as one who had a claim to do so

and she had willingly welcomed him. They were the finest couple in the room—and their graceful figures as they moved slowly through the flaunting scene, would have struck an artist as the finest object for his eye to rest upon. Their features too, appeared subdued into pensiveness—there was something in their expression in keeping with the scene. Neither spoke, yet both instinctively felt there was a bond of sympathy between them.

Just then Morland's glance suddenly fell upon the blue eyed girl who the night before had so earnestly regarded him in the Opera box. It was the first time he had seen her during the present evening; she was now watching him with the same melancholy look—and Morland, he knew not why, for an instant felt like a culprit before her.

Her appearance was not calculated to strike the eye, in a scene like this. Yet it had a gracefulness all its own. She was *petite*, but

exquisitely formed—her dress was simplicity itself and her quiet features seemed to acquire a new beauty every time they were looked upon.

Morland was about to ask her name, when she prevented the question by joining them. Almost at that instant Maria's carriage was announced, Morland led them to it, and once more he could see by the light of the lanterns the same melancholy look fixed upon him; Maria waved her hand—he mechanically bowed, and the carriage drove away.

CHAPTER III.

HENRY Morland saw himself the favourite of the loveliest woman in London, one to whom he had surrendered his heart, almost his honour, for her husband was his friend. His passion had been increased, by her manner towards himself—his admiration fired by her brilliant qualities of mind, his vanity gratified by having distanced ~~a~~ hundred rivals;—the future now

seemed to be strewed with roses, for she whom he had lately worshipped almost as a being of another sphere—whom his imagination had surrounded with the halo of poetry, was now as much the votary as the idol. She had seen and welcomed his pretensions to her love, and yet almost on the threshold of that love's confession—at the the very moment when every obstacle to express it was withdrawn, Henry Morland felt that a new interest had arisen in his bosom ; and trivial as seemed its cause, he could yet say like the Persian “ all these things avail me nothing” so long as my heart hankers after a wish unfulfilled.

Who was this Mordecai to his happiness he knew not ; yet the quiet mournful look of those large blue eyes remained longer in his memory than all the brilliancy and gratification of the previous hours. She was evidently some friend of Maria's, whom on the following day he was to visit, and strange as it may seem he drove

to her mansion with his mind more intent on this discovery than occupied with the reception which he might meet.

Maria was alone. The elegant boudoir in which she sat was in perfect keeping with such an inmate. She appeared fatigued with the scenes of gaiety she had lately passed through, and without rising from her seat held out her beautiful hand with that air of easy cordiality, which is dearer than the form of a hundred welcomes.

Once more Morland felt the spell, and his heart and soul were again surrendered to the sorceress. They spoke at first in the meaningless words of courtesy, but by degrees their conversation took another turn ; Morland incidentally mentioned "constancy."

"It has been the Poet's heir-loom," said Maria smiling, "and yet it is a worthless word."

"Worthless !"

“Aye, worse than that. It does not, cannot exist. The heart knows no bondage—nature itself has made change universal—if not eternal. Constancy is a word which may exist in heaven but not on earth.”

“In love too, can there be no constancy?”

“It is there I first discovered it could not exist.”

“Nay but your sex—at least in England—”

“Are faithful, but not constant in love. It is the imperial doom of society which makes us so. But the heart still is free; and will wander on forbidden ground. Fidelity of *heart* never existed in man or woman.”

“And yet vows of constancy are daily made.”

“And broken. Selfishness makes us cheat ourselves; we confound pleasure with the object which produces it. It is unreasonable to wish to love it longer than it has the power to please.”

“And yet must no effort be made to—”

“Effort! It ceases to be love then. Restraint and bondage are its death. We can no more love, than cease to love, by all the efforts which reason can employ.”

“And yet from you—”

“To hear such language may be strange.”

“And yet it may be true.”

“Nay,” cried the other fervently, “I hope it is not so. And more than that, I devoutly hope that these are not your real sentiments.”

A flash of triumph rose, in spite of herself, to Maria's eyes as she witnessed the mortified look with which Morland listened to her.

“Such love as this,” said she with a smile, “you deem to be hardly worthy of being asked for?”

“You half interpret my thoughts,” said

Morland. "I would rather be cheated like the fondest enthusiast that ever erred, than adopt the cold philosophy which applies the line and plummet to emotions of the heart."

"But think you the philosophy is false?"

"I am sure that it is. The dogmas of reason cannot be applied to the feelings which influence the passions or the will. I would rather that love was banished from the world, than that it should be denied—"

"The Ape's privilege of blinding itself. Be it so. And yet you may live to acknowledge the truth of the maxims you now despise. Do you go to Lady Broadland's to-night?"

Morland was piqued. Her cold, measured words were at variance with her previous manner; they depressed and mortified him. He had come to declare his love; he had not dreamed but the declaration would have been

an acceptable one; but the words he had listened to froze the passion by which he had been swayed; and while in effect it lessened the value of the heart he had panted for, it made him the more anxious to obtain it. To obtain it with the affection which but an hour ago he fondly believed it was ready to give, and the very consciousness of possessing which had, unconfessed to himself, given an apathy to the wish of its acknowledgment.

Perhaps Maria felt this. At all events she preserved her empire. She was no conquest yet, whatever her real feelings might have been. Morland was puzzled as well as piqued; she had dared censure on his account, and now when they met—unconfessed, but understood as lovers,—she seemed to sneer at the very emotions which she had fostered and avowed—avowed in act if not in word; for while his memory ran over her previous bear-

ing towards him, the contrast of her present words seemed an enigma which he could not understand.

“ You have lost your usual gaiety to-day,” resumed Maria.

“ I frankly confess,” replied Morland, “ I am mortified to have heard such sentiments from you.”

Maria laughed. The beautiful dark eyes still brightened, as turning them towards him, she again exclaimed—

“ And are they not just? You think then that you—I mean your sex—while you are ready enough to vow eternal constancy in a case where the breach of such a promise can affect you no more than as an uneasy thought; and even when you vow to have the secret knowledge that the obligation can never remain longer than you choose to suffer it—You think that in such a case you are to

look for eternal constancy in return! Is it not unreasonable, preposterous, unnatural?—nay, not unnatural, for selfishness is never that. But believe me, the woman who gives up her heart on such a venture, is—a fool!”

“Lady,” said Morland in a voice trembling with ill suppressed emotion, “you do me wrong if you think such calculating affection could be mine. I confess I do not understand it—I—I—I—cannot—dare not speak what I feel.”

“It is unnecessary,” interrupted the other. “But why this solemn fervour? That clouded brow, and troubled eye of yours? Nay, it must not be so. The world around us has sufficient gloom for both, without our throwing shadows on each other. Come I will be candid; Last night you would have assented to any of my propositions, but to-day you seem disposed to con-

trovert them. And yet even then too I remember a pair of blue eyes seemed to have startled you."

A few minutes before, Morland would have coloured to the brow at these words, and eagerly inquired who the fair stranger was ; but now he heard the allusion without interest. He was vexed and piqued ; and his mind too much occupied with Maria's inexplicable bearing to have leisure for anything else. It was therefore in a cold tone, and with the unconcern which he really felt, that he inquired—
" Who is the lady to whom you allude ?"

" Lucy Murray—my husband's sister."

" Lucy Murray !" exclaimed Morland, " I thought there were traits in the countenance that I knew. I remember her many years ago when a mere girl. I remember having been a favourite with her—having broken in a pony for her—taught her to ride—loved her like a

sister. Lucy Murray ! grown a woman. I used to spend the Summer vacation at her father's with Edward when he and I were students of Oxford. Lucy Murray ! how odd, I did not know her."

As Morland ran on thus, Maria's countenance seemed to change. She looked keenly at him, but he had fallen into a reverie, and did not notice the attention which he created. At length, somewhat abruptly, he inquired—

" Does Lucy live with you ?"

" No ; she lives with her aunt, Mrs. Colonel Stuart."

" Does *she* go to Lady Broadhurst's to-night ?"

" I presume she does. Her ladyship is a friend of Mrs. Stuart's."

" Lucy Murray ! how odd, how very odd !"

The blood mantled to Maria's cheek, her fine countenance assumed an expression of

haughtiness, and her eyes might have betrayed the passion which before she scoffed at.

“ I have never met Lucy here,” observed Morland, heedless of the sudden interest which he so strangely betrayed. “ Never once ; and she has been in town then some time ? Edward might have told me of it ; but he has become strangely abstracted of late. Is Lucy often here ? ”

“ Seldom ; but these are questions which she will answer you herself. Do not anticipate the pleasure you will derive from such information by hearing it now.”

The piqued tone in which Maria uttered these words, made Morland feel that his conversation had taken a turn which was displeasing to her. He saw that there was anger in her looks, and he half acknowledged to himself it was not unmerited. But a strange damp had fallen upon his passion ; wild, fer-

vent as it had been, and powerful as still was its influence over him, it had lost that active charm which blends love with every thought, and gives one colouring to every object of the mind. And this too seemed to have taken place without a cause, or from one so slight as hardly to be worthy of the name. The dream remained, but its delirium had passed away.

They parted—but with an evident constraint on both sides;—that evening however they met again. •

Whether it had been love, or the mere desire of conquest which had made Maria bring Morland to her feet, it might be difficult to determine;—her nature was of that character which defies the ordinary rules of calculating motives, and the scrutiny of actions seemingly contradictory in themselves, only lead to a like result. But now her wildest feelings were excited. She had encountered opposition in a

purpose, no matter how lightly formed—her pride, her jealousy, all were aroused—she resolved to crush her rival and to make Morland once more her slave.

She was again the centre of the courtly circle. The admiring eyes (envious although some of them were) of all present, were cast upon her; she was again the triumphant Beauty of the night. Other fair forms were there—of higher rank, and even of younger years, but Maria was the Queen of Beauty in the scene.

She was sitting surrounded by a cluster of gentlemen all paying her willing court, and almost homage, when her eyes suddenly fell upon Morland standing at a remote part of the room, watching with intense interest, the light sylph-like form of Lucy Murray as she walked slowly at some distance conversing with Sir Wyndham Fletcher, on whose arm she leaned. Maria's countenance changed, and shewed

the chagrin she could not conceal. She rose abruptly from the place where she sat, and bowing slightly to those she had been conversing with—joined a lady at a distant part of the room.

Meantime Morland who had waited with impatience for a favourable opportunity of being introduced to Lucy, had at length the satisfaction of finding one. She blushed deeply on being accosted, and while politeness required that she should take his offered arm she did so almost with a shudder. It was in vain that he spoke of former days, and shewed that his memory still retained the impression of many a trivial scene. She listened, not only coldly, but in a manner that shewed something approaching to uneasiness at his society as well as inattention to his words. Morland now seemed to be the football of other's caprice as well his own;—his character with many vices had

enough virtue in it to make it unsteady, and a finely tempered imagination and a generous heart, made a career of dissipation, rather one of turmoil to his passions than of gratification to himself. He became restless and dissatisfied, he felt himself in a position almost ridiculous—for his absence from Maria as well as the seeming uncongeniality of his present companion was noticed by many. But Maria had already chosen a rival to replace him, a rival of a far different character to the wavering and sentimental Morland; by one of those almost dramatic changes which not unfrequently are met with in the diplomacy of love.

Sir Wyndham Fletcher, defeated in joining Lucy Murray, had attached himself to Maria, and had the unexpected delight of being welcomed by her. It was woman's common error, to revenge slight by an act that steels the

truant heart for ever. Morland far from writhing under the infliction, saw through the thin disguise. It shewed him that he was the cause of the Baronet's sudden favour—it shewed him as such a step ever does, that he was an object of interest to one who wished to play a tyrant's part, and so far from mortifying or humbling him, it encreased his pride—It convinced him of the true character of the heart for which a day before he would have surrendered life and honour;—it marred its object. Morland felt ashamed of his passion; and perhaps more keenly so, because he believed he had been a woman's dupe. Maria had lost one lover, but she had drawn another and a far more dangerous one into her toils. Sir Wyndham Fletcher, was one of the most accomplished men of the day—even now he is remembered as a Wit among wits; a man of intrigue in a licentious court, or rather in a coterie which had for its chief member the Heir

to the Throne. Young, handsome, and shrewd beyond his years, subtle and bold—he was formed for success in that debasing career whose chief aim like that of the arch fiend is to destroy. He had squandered much of a once princely heritage but still enough remained to enable him to pursue a life of fashionable folly; while his accomplishments and reputed gallantries made him if not a favourite, at least a person of consideration with a certain portion of the sex.

His character was a singular one. It combined passion, and impetuosity, with craft and clear-headedness;—he had the most perfect command over himself, yet it was whispered of him that in quarrels his revenge was fiend-like. His mind active and enterprising, unshackled in his guilty career by any sentiment of virtue, had led him of late years through tortuous paths; his name was a familiar one in the council chamber, the gambling house and the

courtly hall ;—wherever wit, talent, penetration and intrigue were required, there Sir Wyndham Fletcher could command respect.

He saw easily the purpose for which Maria honoured him with her favor. But that troubled him but little ;—she was as subtle as himself ;—but then she was a woman and a lovely one. She had begun by a false move, for Maria in the blindness of her anger did not perceive that Sir Wyndham penetrated her design, while he suffered himself in semblance to be made a puppet of.

The evening to the four more particularly alluded to, passed tediously away. Morland soon left the party vexed and out of spirits. Maria joined Lucy and Mrs. Stuart, and also retired at an early hour, but not before her new lover had contrived almost unknown to herself to learn from her all her engagements for a week to come. He wisely forbore obtruding himself, and seeing that when Morland had departed

his "occupation" like Othello's "was gone," soon left Maria to the freedom of her own will, and took a place at one of the card tables.

Edward Murray that evening had departed somewhat abruptly, on a tour with a party of gentlemen into Germany.

CHAPTER IV.

MORLAND'S guilty passion had been like a dream, sudden, wild, and evanescent; it was nipped in the very bud, destroyed ere it had fastened itself upon his heart too indelibly, to be torn away without a scar. Accident had done this, which perhaps had more of fastidiousness than romance connected with it; but Morland's wayward character was not

governed by the stock ideas of the romancist, and although the precepts of the moralist were equally undeserving of the credit of the change, yet he felt his heart lighter at having abandoned a pursuit which could only have led to dishonour and disgrace.

Murray had been his old and well tried friend, he had heard indeed of the dark circumstance connected with his union; the whirl of the world had weakened many of his former feelings, and he had been captivated into a delirium of love by one of the loveliest and most fascinating of her sex—but the spell almost without an effort had been dissolved, and a new object if it did not equally fill his heart, at least equally engaged his attention. Old sympathies were revived in his bosom, and Morland almost forgot that Maria had ever stood in any other relation towards him than that of the wife of his friend. Yet he was far from being happy. Shutting his eyes to all that had lately in-

fluenced him, he strove by every means in his power to renew his acquaintance with Lucy, whose singular aversion to his society only made him the more anxious to be received with the cordiality of former years; he knew not the cause of her repugnance, it was another riddle which puzzled him to solve. His friends observed the change which had of late taken place in his manner, and rallied him upon it; but it was from a cause which could not be explained; and even Maria herself, although too proud to droop at such an event, was more surprised than mortified at so sudden a revulsion of feeling.

But Maria had tampered with a scorpion. Two months were now passed, and Sir Wyndham had imperceptibly acquired an influence over her which her utmost efforts could not shake off. His insensibility to her slights, his patience under all her caprices, and his perfect devotion to her most trivial wish; his almost

intuitive knowledge of her character, and correct divination of her best-concealed designs, commanded in spite of herself, the proud Beauty's attention; and almost she began to admire a character, in many respects akin to her own.

It was a bright June day, and a large equestrian party rode out from Dorville Park, the seat of the gay Countess of that name. And here too, first in grace and beauty, was Maria. She sat her high-blooded horse with the fearlessness of an accustomed horse-woman, and the natural elegance which attended her most trivial act. Her finely moulded figure never appeared to greater advantage than when on horseback, while the rich flush that mantled on her cheek, and the excitement that sparkled in her wild jetty eyes might have personified the fairest creation of a poet's dream. Sir Wyndham Fletcher was of the party, and as usual had attached himself to her side.

Their conversation appeared to become more interesting to both for they soon drew bridle and walked their horses over the smooth velvet turf.

"Then you say, or rather you think," said Maria turning her eloquent eyes to his, "that the world's maxims as rules of life are wrong?"

"I do."

"They at least have prudence on their side."

"To those who go through life with no better guides than the cramped maxims of limited experience, but to higher minds they are worthless. They are all isolated, their wisdom is perhaps correct in the aggregate, but in individual application it is wrong a thousand times."

"And yet," resumed Maria, "such as the world is, we are obliged to live in it; and it is as well to do so under favor of its laws."

“ And raise a temple to the sober virtue of moderation. It has a sublimity no doubt, but like all other sublime things, ennui follows in its train. Passion and ambition those quicker impulses of the heart, laugh at the cold marble image which the grave world worships, and crown their very sins with laurel.”

“ Ah, passion ! and do you, the man of the world—the gambler in all life’s hazards—the cool-headed, calculating man of pleasure—what can *you* tell of passion ?”

“ This much,” said he, looking keenly at her, “ this much ; the confirmation of an old saying, that when the heart is still agitated by the remains of a passion, no matter whether one of conquest or one of love, it is more susceptible of a new one than when entirely at rest.

Maria blushed—for the first time since womanhood. “ I do not misinterpret your

allusion," said she smiling, "and yet it may be wrong."

"The world has a maxim which would support a different belief."

"Nay, nay, nay, then it is wrong," said Maria abruptly.

"My argument is now unnecessary," replied Fletcher smiling.

Maria laughed and raised her horse's head, as if about to urge it to a more rapid pace. Sir Wyndham however suffered his bridle to hang slackly, and his horse to walk. Maria allowed her reins to drop again.

"She is mine!" thought the Baronet to himself as he secretly observed the act.

"You said the opinion of the world is generally wrong," resumed Maria thoughtfully.

"Not so, it is generally right as to its estimate of individuals, but wrong as to the rules it prescribes for them."

“ And yet is it not often wrong in the opinion it forms of persons ? ”

“ Rarely so.”

“ You think that ? ”

“ I do.”

“ But sometimes we meet characters which the world cannot understand ; minds which are not influenced by the narrow rules of the policy of life ; natures that live as it were in a world of their own ; whose virtues, aye, and whose vices too are different, and spring from other causes than such as the world would refer them to ; who act up to no law either of prudence or of virtue, yet rarely violate either ; who exist as it were as speculators in life, ruling and scorning the hearts which worship them ; feeling happiness where others would grieve, and sorrowing where others would rejoice ; Beings as inscrutable to themselves as to others.

“ Nay pardon me, not to themselves ; your

own words prove that there you are wrong. You have described imperfectly perhaps—yet your description shews me that you could correctly pourtray your own character. Is it not so? Were you not drawing upon your own feelings for every word you just now uttered? The harmony of arrangement was defective, and the grouping too vague; yet there were materials for as lovely a riddle as ever perplexed a casulst.”

“ Well, granted that such a nature was understood by itself, how easy to disguise its real character from the world.”

“ *On est peut être plus fin qu'un autre mais non plus fin que tous les autres,*” remarked Sir Wyndham lightly tipping his horse's mane with his riding whip.

Maria heard no more, but suddenly urging her horse, galloped forward and joined the rest of the party.

That evening when the Countess' spacious

drawing-room was filled with guests, while music, cards and the dance engrossed the greater portion, Maria found herself alone beside a folding window that led into the garden. It was a lovely night. There was no moon, but the deep caves of blue ether still shed light upon the earth; here and there a star was trembling, and the stillness of the scene gave it a serenity which was heavenly. Maria passed out on to the lawn; a garden seat was near and she reclined upon it.

“How beautiful is the earth!” said she thinking aloud, “how delightful the world might be if the heart could will it so; if there was no pride, ambition, love—”

“Not so,” said a voice in the same soft whisper, as a hand lightly touched her shoulder, “it was love that made Paradise itself endurable.”

Maria had started to her feet; but as quickly resumed her seat on seeing who the intruder

was; and Sir Wyndham Fletcher as he spoke placed himself by her side.

"You are still love's advocate," she observed.

"And I am afraid shall continue so when Love is no client of mine."

And would you wish it so?"

"I would. Love and age are not incompatible. I would have my affection increase with my years."

"Provided it were returned?"

"Nay, nay," observed the other smiling, "I am not one of those who make provision for old age."

"But think you," continued Maria, "that love can so endure?"

"It is a passion in which we often doubt of what we most believe," replied the other turning his keen eyes towards his companion.

Maria understood the glance.

"And yet," she resumed; "to judge of love by most of its effects it seems more like hatred than kindness."

"Not love—it is not love then—there is only one sort of love, as a wise man has said, although there are a thousand copies of it. The attachment that merits the name cannot have such results. It is the purest and most deeply-rooted passion of our nature, and the most constant one as well."

"Constant!"

"Even so. True love must be constant. It is absurd to say that the greatness of the passion destroys itself, for unless ardent and passionate it cannot be enduring; slight wounds are easily cured, but deep ones remain for ever."

"I believe it not."

"You do."

"Ah! no!"

“ Pardon me, but it is so. Nay then, if you frown I will echo back your words ; and simpler honied phrases ’till you are cloyed again.”

“ No, speak ever as you think ; you have shewn me that gallantry does not influence your expressions ; you believe that love can endure with life ?”

“ Religiously. It will and must so endure ; even if the object be unfaithful—even if dishonored, scorned and hooted from the world—even if stained with crime, still it—”

“ Crime !” murmured Maria. “ Oh ! no, no not if stained by crime !”

“ It is not love then.”

“ What—and no reproach ! no dark thought clouding the brow—no suspicion—no secret abhorrence—no cold looks—no self-abasement for such a love ;—say, none ; none of these ?”

“ None ! If Heaven’s gates were shut against such a one—Love would cling to its object still.”

“Nay,” said Maria rising, and half ashamed of the vehemence with which she had spoken, “such love as that exists not upon earth. But come, the night-air grows cool; let us re-enter the house.

CHAPTER V.

THERE is something fine in the wreck of a noble character—if the word can legitimately be applied to that whose only associations are those of melancholy. The grandeur of human nature is often seen in its ruins—and the mind whose early aspirations were those that form the hero or the man of genius, loses not even when its best energies are crushed all the

elements of greatness. There is a lingering dignity which crime cannot deaden, nor abasement destroy; a loneliness of feeling which seems like banishment, a sensitiveness of suffering which no repeated wounds can dull;—a harrowing rankling thought, that still points to the past and with a fiendish laugh compares the present with the sunny visions of happier days. But those whose hearts were strung to feel the impulses of the loftiest sentiments, not the master powers of reasons and elevation of thought alone, but the nicer touches that thrill like pulses of the soul, to such the prostration of all the idols they once fondly worshipped—whether virtue, glory, or self-respect—turns the fire, which can only be quenched with life, against itself, and forms a character as dangerous as the other is sad. The one like the chained eagle, droops in stately languishing, but the other like the prisoned scorpion strikes its sting into its own head and writhes.

Edward Murray had little of the Cato in his composition. With a fine genius and a noble heart, his character was deficient in firmness. He had made a false move on entering into life, he was not possessed of that philosophic spirit which views situations only as they may be rendered happy or adverse;—he could not endure with fortitude, evils which he had hardly the resolution to look upon aright. It has been said indeed that much of fortitude in all cases is owing to insensibility;—Murray felt acutely, and although he could have braved danger as becomes a hero, he could hardly suffer as becomes a man.

He was changed, sadly changed, the elasticity of his spirits was gone—and although the natural fire of his character still remained, its fierceness was turned into self-reproach. His countenance betrayed sorrow and suffering;—his fine clear eyes were still bright, but had an occasional wildness that told of agony. All.

his hopes were shipwrecked;—he had forsaken the only path that could have led to fame and honor—had lived abroad, and abandoned himself to love. To a passion which when its first delirium was over, increased the dreadful suspicion that had never left his mind—and made him the more anxious to banish it from his thoughts—to crush the conviction of the guilt of one who stood towards him in the dear and sacred relation of wife;—to *believe* her innocent he would have given worlds. But these efforts only encreased the morbid doubt; his anxious mind fretted itself to virulence—and he sank under its weight to utter wretchedness.

It is difficult to appear amiable to others when we are unhappy with ourselves, and although Murray never reproached his wife—never accused her of the dreadful crime of which he believed her to be guilty, never even by a hint; yet his manner towards her changed ;

love, passion perhaps remained ; but the pure affection which is based upon respect and esteem, Murray could *not* feel. On the contrary he felt himself dishonored by his union—dishonored by that which every wife deems should be a husband's pride ;—he betrayed oftener and more palpably than he was aware of the secret thoughts which poisoned his peace of mind ; he became moody and abstracted, and until his late residence in London, had lived as far as he could retired from the world.

These were symptoms which could not be disguised ; Maria almost intuitively read his thoughts, his sufferings were of a nature that repelled at once any attempt of hers to assuage—she could neither offer sympathy or condolence ; they banished her from his very bosom ; her influence over him was no longer that of the idol over its worshipper—it was merely that which reason can pause to judge.

Perhaps the first conviction of such a truth was a bitter one to Maria. But her heart would not pine—she longed for excitement; for a sphere of action—to mingle with the world—woman's ready substitute for those cherished day-dreams of happiness and love.

The ambition to appear happy when we have no longer the means of being so—or at least of being so, eminently and after our own manner—almost in every case destroys the little happiness which our condition might still command. And so it was with Maria. She became fired with the desire of conquest—her exquisite beauty was admired wherever she appeared;—she launched into a life of gaiety;—her husband's family although comparatively poor was highly connected, and her own was one of the proudest in the land. She appeared like a sudden vision in the world of fashion, every body spoke of her graces of person, and brilliant qualities of mind.

Yet Maria secretly despised the triflers by whom she was surrounded. Acute, subtle, and daring, she tampered with the love of many. Morland was the last, and he was rather the deserter than the scorned, yet such ultimately would probably have been his fate. Maria, however, was indignant at his seeming indifference; she was piqued that he should have been the first to withdraw from the fascination which had once almost blinded his reason, she was even impolitic enough to play a part which revealed anger not only to him, but to the rival whom she thoughtlessly invited to supplant him.

And here it was that Maria's triumph ended. Her heart still smarting with the thought of having been slighted by one whom she knew had been her devoted worshipper, listened to the other whose mind was as acute and as subtle as her own. There soon existed a sympathy of character between them, for every

sin and every crime in the eyes of each was covered by the wild fearless impulses of the heart, by the passion which both in common shared—by the pride of superior intelligence, and the communion to which this intelligence gave rise. Maria had acted unwisely, prudence was not one of her virtues when passion was in the way, and her course soon became one that led impetuously to destruction.

Her husband received a letter during his tour abroad in an unknown hand, warning him of the state of affairs at home, and recommending his return to England.

It needed but this to fill his cup of misery to the brim. The letter almost maddened him. It gave a new turn to his feelings however, and although, by the influence of the worst passions of our nature, aroused the dormant energies of his character.

Meantime Morland had exerted all his efforts to be upon a friendly footing with Lucy

Murray, but finding these abortive, and that she still repelled him by the same firm coldness as before, left London in chagrin, and crossed over to the continent, in the hope and intention of joining her brother.

Report was busy on the occasion, but as usual in some respects the truth was disguised ; and it was rumoured that Henry Morland had a companion in his wanderings. Murray hurried home from Germany to learn the full extent of his wife's imprudence. He arrived late in the day at his princely mansion. The servants who met him looked startled and uneasy—he passed into the house, but found on all sides silence and looks of dismay ; without asking questions, he entered the drawing-room—it was empty, from thence he proceeded to the boudoir of Maria ; that too was deserted, he dared not ask what his fears foreboded, but almost in a state of delirium re-entered the vehicle which had conveyed him home, and drove to his

sister. He was hastily announced. "Maria! where is Maria!" cried Murray.

Lucy started up, and throwing her arms round her brother's neck sobbed as if her heart would break!

When the storm of emotions which neither had power to controul had in some measure subsided, Murray learned from his sister, that Maria had that morning abruptly quitted her home, alone and unattended, leaving a note for her husband directed to the care of Lucy, in which she merely stated she should return no more. Being ignorant where to forward it, as Murray's arrival was daily expected, the unhappy girl had perused it; and received the shock which had deprived her of the power to think, or act under circumstances so distressing.

That Morland was the partner of Maria's flight, or would be so, poor Lucy doubted not! And her heart was crushed, under this two-fold

load of anguish. Frantic from what he heard the wretched husband ordered his cabriolet, determined to seek for Morland, or obtain news of his proceedings, at the different club-houses he frequented.

In less than half an hour it was at the door, and Murray, after wringing his sister's hand in silent agony, and imprinting a kiss on her pale, cold lips, rushed from the house, and was springing into the vehicle when the groom, evidently guessing the cause of his master's impatience, informed him that he had accidentally seen in his way thither, a lady resembling his mistress, closely wrapped up, in a travelling carriage, which stopped at the corner of B—— Square; when a gentleman whose features he could not discern, drove up, as if by appointment to meet the lady, but that on seeing the cabriolet he was driving, which was easily recognised to be Murray's, the lady had suddenly quitted the carriage, and entered the vehicle driven

by the unknown gentleman, which had immediately started off at a furious pace. The groom added he had followed it for some distance, and was convinced they had taken the Dover road.

With almost a shriek of agony, Murray sprang into his cabriolet, and giving the whip and rein to the spirited horse, dashed forward in the direction pointed out by the groom.

CHAPTER VI.

It was a drizzly February night. London was full, and the gay regions at the court end of the town were in all the bustle of festivity. Carriages drove rapidly along, their lighted lanterns flashing in the darkness. Cabs rattled furiously over the splashing streets, while here and there the stately coach of some

jewelled Dowager moved heavily onwards, forming as it were a relief to the noisy tumult on every side.

A handsome cabriolet drawn by a proud bay horse glided lightly but rapidly through the environs leading from London to the Dover road. The driver was a young man who occasionally looked around him as if he dreaded being recognised. His groom, too, seemed infected with the same fear, as keeping an unsteady hold of the back of the vehicle, he stood with his head turned round, gazing up the dark street they were receding from.

Hardly was this out of sight, when another cabriolet appeared dashing furiously onward, in the same direction; the two lanterns glaring almost fearfully from the rapid rate at which it approached; it was also driven by a young man whose looks and gestures betrayed great excitement, and who lashed the maddened horse until he made bounds that threatened

every moment to throw off the groom—and even to dash the cab itself to pieces.

On it drove amid the exclamations of all whom it passed, and not unfrequently the execrations of the coachmen whose horses were startled by its furious career. But it was also soon out of sight and the bustling thoroughfare resumed its former appearance.

The vehicle first mentioned proceeded at the same rapid rate through various streets, until entering a narrow lane the driver ordered the groom to descend and put out the lights.— This was done and then it passed into one of the leading thoroughfares, crossed another and quieter street, and by a circuitous route took a course in the opposite direction to that which it had hitherto pursued.

After continuing a few minutes longer in this direction, the driver slackened his pace, and gave his panting horse a short breathing time.

But his pursuer had followed with the instinct of a blood-hound. The two lanterns were again seen flashing in the distance ; the first cabriolet again turned into another street—the driver again urged on his high spirited horse, and once more his groom called out they were still pursued.

They were now driving in the direction of the open country ; all disguise was at an end ; it was evident the fleetest horse would carry it.

And both vehicles were finely horsed, and driven by bold and skilful hands. The paved streets were quickly succeeded by the smoother road—the lighted shops gave place to silent houses, darkened by rows of trees—and the carriages on their path to the loaded coach and the lazy waggon. The night too became more stormy, the rain increased and a thick darkness hung over the scene like a cloud. The wind blew cold and drizzly, the showers

splashed on the miry road, and the horses panted loud and painfully.

But on they drove. The first driver became more agitated and frequently addressed a companion who sat crouching by his side.—It was in hurried whispers and always succeeded by a demand to the groom if their pursuers gained ground, and on the repeated answer in the affirmative, by renewed urging onwards of the wearied horse.

“He is close upon us,” muttered the young man waving his whip.

“On, on,” replied his companion.

“The horse will sink,” continued the other, “he hangs on the reins—another mile will exhaust him.”

“On, on,” murmured his companion. “His must be equally so,” and on they still continued. The noble animal seemed to gather up his strength, and in spite of fatigue to bound forward with renewed vigour. But these efforts

although often repeated were but momentary—his shoulder leaned heavily on the collar, and although his legs still spurned the splashing road, his head began to droop.

They were approaching a turnpike gate. It was now almost midnight. The gate was closed. As the cab drew near the driver shouted to the gatekeeper; but no one had come out to let them pass. The two lanterns of the approaching cab were every second nearing the place. The groom descended from the vehicle and striking furiously on the window shutters succeeded in rousing the gatekeeper. The gate was opened. At that instant the pursuer's cab was not twenty yards behind.

“Stand there and keep them back,” cried the young man dashing through the gate.

The groom did so ;—He shut the gate and held it. The second cab came up and he who drove it shouted furiously to clear the way.

The gate-keeper confused and almost alarmed stood passive ; the groom still kept his post, in spite of the threats of the infuriated driver. He struck at him fiercely with his whip ; the other groom now descended and prepared to force a passage. The gate-keeper seconded his efforts and the cabriolet passed through.

But time had been lost. The first vehicle was already on a considerable distance, ere the second was able to continue the pursuit. It was however either better horsed or more recklessly driven, for in a short time it began again to gain ground on the fugitives.

"Hark ! I hear wheels behind us," muttered the foremost driver. Ha ! by heaven, he gains upon us."

"The pistols," whispered his companion. "But remember they are our last resource."

The other only replied by urging on his panting horse by word and whip.

"The Star Inn is only a mile distant,"

resumed he after a pause, "could we but once reach that, we are safe."

"How, how?" eagerly inquired the person addressed.

"The landlord is under obligations to me. The fellow is staunch and would hold out against all England. Hark! I hear them at our heels!"

"No, no, it was but the rushing of a brook. We may yet reach the Inn."

"Never, the horse is drooping. Hold firmly by me."

As he spoke the lanterns of the pursuer threw a gleam even over the ground before them, and a cry, or rather yell of exultation burst upon their ears.

Already was the pursuing horse covered with foam, almost within a yard of the foremost vehicle; when the young man who drove it, violently forcing back the hood, stood up, and turning suddenly round discharged a pistol at

the head of the noble animal. The horse made a violent spring and fell dead upon the ground; while its hapless master lay senseless and bleeding on the road by its side.

Onward dashed the fugitives;—but ere they had proceeded far, their own horse fell exhausted to the ground. Springing instantly from the vehicle the gentleman assisted his companion to alight. It was a female; closely wrapped up, who, as she glanced around on the dark and desolate scene, uttered an exclamation of terror.

“Fear not,” said her companion drawing her arm within his own, “the Inn is not far distant—we cannot be pursued now.”

“Is he killed?” demanded the female in a trembling tone.

“His horse is.”

“Nay, but I saw *him* fall,” continued the lady in the same tone of alarm.

“Pshaw! fear not. He may be bruised—

but the road is soft. Dearest ! don't you find it so ? Your feet will be wet through. Lean firmer on me. You tremble."

"He is killed ! I know he is killed !" murmured the other.

"Is his life so valuable then ?" demanded her companion pettishly.

"He once saved mine," was the mournful reply.

"And thereby reaped a goodly harvest.— But see ! yonder is the Inn."

"We must send assistance to the place. He may die upon the road."

"Well, we will do so ! It would be an awkward thing to have a verdict of culpable homicide recorded against me ; for I am afraid that would be the finale of the catastrophe. Heavens, how it rains !"

They reached the Inn, and were shewn into a warm room with a brightly burning fire. The lady threw off her cloak and bonnet, and the

luxuriant raven hair escaping from its confinement fell in rich clusters over the pale but still beautiful face of the guilty Heiress of Lynwood.

Orders were instantly given by Sir Wyndham Fletcher, (for he was the companion of Maria) to procure a post chariot and four, for the fugitives to proceed; and to send a conveyance for the wounded man. The order was promptly obeyed, and a chariot was soon horsed and at the door, and having compelled her to swallow a glass of wine to keep her from fainting; Maria was again muffled up, and hurried by Sir Wyndham to the carriage. She was leaning on Fletcher's arm, and had just raised one foot on the step when a gig drove to the Inn door; she turned and looked towards it—when her eyes, by the light of the lanterns, encountered those of her husband.

He was ghastly and bleeding, and supported by the arm of the person who drove the gig; it was a traveller, who, passing that road, had

found the unfortunate Murray and conveyed him hither. At the sight of his wife he fell back, and groaned aloud. His head sank upon his bosom and the timely approach of two or three loiterers round the Inn yard saved him from falling to the ground.

But Maria and her companion were already speeding onwards in their guilty flight as fast as four horses could carry them !

THE FIRST BRIEF.

BOOK III.

THE JOURNAL

1880

THE FIRST BRIEF.

CHAPTER I.

"It is the bent and privilege of virtue
Not to pick bad from bad—but by bad mend."

OTHELLO.

In the gorgeous chamber of an Italian Palace Maria sat alone; she was leaning her brow upon her hand in an attitude of thought; her pale features shewed distress of mind, although the proud expression into which nature had moulded them, seemed struggling to conceal her wretchedness. And still Maria was beautiful. Lines of care had indeed impaired the

E 5.

juvenile harmony of that lovely face, there was a slight sinking in the blanched cheek, and even the finely turned figure that a sculptor might have studied, had lost something of its wonted symmetry. But those dark passionate eyes, retained their lustre—the rich dark hair fell negligently but still in luxuriance round her snowy neck, and the small delicate hand on which her forehead rested, was a model in itself.

Many a Beauty has glided for a few bright seasons through the fashionable world; many a lovely form has had its worshippers among the proud and stately sons of England—the “aristocracy of the earth,” as they have been designated by an author of modern days who best pourtrayed them; but of those whose names were once the current terms for all that is witching in woman, few, very few, have been remembered long.

But it was otherwise with Maria. Her life

from womanhood had been a romance;—a dark one indeed, but no less one of interest to her fiercest foes;—her character, amid all the storms of calumny and reproach—of fearful imputations, and slavish homage, preserved throughout her career a wild dignity, which shewed how noble had been the structure which Passion's tempests had destroyed.

But not of that alone. At the present day there are none who remember to have seen her but even once, and in the world's crowd, who do not give unbidden testimony to her exquisite loveliness. Hers were not the marble charms of fine proportions, and of smiling traits, but the vivid expression which flashes on the soul like thought—and claims kindred, though we know it not, with the noblest pulses of the heart;—which remains in memory like an era of our ideas—extending its influence over our feelings and our hopes, delighting the imagina-

tion and elevating the soul. Few can look upon her portrait as it still hangs in its tarnished oval frame in the old chamber at Lynwood, without half doubting if it is indeed from life or a creation of the painter's fancy.

The light was falling softly into the chamber, whose silken draperied walls of color de rose reflected it back in mellowed lines. The air without was hushed and pure; not a leaf was stirring mid the myrtle boughs, there was a calm beauty in the scenery around the princely pile, which made it a fitted spot for luxury and love.

Two years had passed since Maria had fled from England. During that period she had received no intelligence of her husband;—it was generally believed he was dead. He had not been heard of since the night in which he had sustained the injury on the Dover road, and it was supposed he had died in consequence of it;—if not then (for the English Newspapers

were silent on the subject) at least at such a period afterwards as did not require a public investigation.

Nor could Sir Wyndham Fletcher, the guilty companion of Maria's flight and subsequent sojourn, obtain any information through the medium of his agents in London. Murray had not been seen or heard of in the Metropolis; his few immediate relatives, on the elopement of his wife, had left town, and his mere acquaintance believed him to be dead.

Such was the conviction under which Maria had lived. It cast a gloom over her spirits which affected, in spite of herself, her whole demeanour. Fletcher had now the same ground of complaint against his companion, which she once had against her husband; and one in truth that had been the chief cause of the wild and reckless step she had taken.

Yet in one respect Maria had not miscalculated her power. The man of the World—the

votary of Pleasure—he who could have considered with Buckingham, that marriage and seclusion were the greatest calamities of life ;—the sneerer at the sincerity of love, and the sceptic of the sacrifices it is said to command—loved to the wildest doating the proud-souled Beauty who had abandoned all for him. Even as the outcast from society, as the mistress of a libertine, she reigned still paramount.

“ What ! pensive again my own Maria ? ” exclaimed Sir Wyndham Fletcher entering the saloon. “ Nay, now in good truth it is time to throw off that melancholy look—I am miserable living here alone ; your society is all I ask to make me happy, and yet while you know that without you I am wretched, you play the tyrant and refuse me even a smile.”

“ And I too am tired of this lonely life,” replied Maria mournfully.

“ What then ! would you wish to enter into the world again ? ”

“ I am tired of Italy.”

“ And of me?”

“ It may be that I am.”

“ Frank, by Heaven ! I am playing the boy—the wooer of seventeen—the soft hearted dupe to a woman who—”

“ Is your mistress,” interrupted Maria—
“ I know what you would say—and yet—”

“ Aye, and yet the mistress of a Slave. The mistress of one who doats on you, who first learned from you that he had a heart ;—who now pleads for favour like a suppliant ;—Maria you are a sorceress still !”

“ Because I have kept you two years absent from gaiety. The feat may have been a great one, but it has a feeble sound. Nay, I am not sorry that you think it a sacrifice, for if it is one of my inflicting I am as tired of it as you are.”

“ You mistake me, Maria. My fortune has improved since my residence here—and in spite of your wayward humour, my happiness also ;

I have no wish to return to England—no wish to re-enter scenes from which you would necessarily be excluded, all that I ask is —”

“Love!—Wyndham I can give it no more;—Ennui has consumed it—I am weary of this sort of life, I long for excitement—I am unhappy.”

“You mean to tell me you have ceased to love me?”

“And if I did, what then?”

“Maria I will not threaten you—but—”

“The scene becomes dramatic—say on my lord and master; I have met greater danger than a lover’s frown.”

“Not so, Maria; I have no threat for you; but ask yourself if this bearing is one that becomes you?”

“I grant that it is not.”

“Nay,” resumed the other fixing his bright intelligent eyes upon her, “but you neither care, nor are sorry for it.”

“Wyndham!” said Maria rising, “we can.

love no more. It is idle to prolong scenes which day by day become more galling. I am tired of this wretched life ; or rather I am the first to tire of it ;—I will return to England. Lynwood still is mine, I will sell, mortgage—enter the world again ;—I have no aim—no thought of happiness, and pass perhaps but from evil to evil. Yet solitude is death to me ;—I have thoughts which rise like scorpions in my bosom. Love itself cannot crush them. I must launch once more into the world ; I have no sympathy with a life like this. I thought I could love you for ever ; your character, bold, subtle, and fearless, pleased me ; it seemed akin to mine. I did not misinterpret your feelings although I judged rashly of my own. Forgive me—we must part. This night I shall leave your roof.”

She had spoken with the rapidity of excitement, and now held out her hand. Fletcher stood confounded—he could not grasp it—he

seemed to doubt if he heard aright. But Maria did not wait for his reply. She retired to her room, summoned her waiting woman, and in a few hours her travelling carriage waited at the Palace gate.

Sir Wyndham, a man of strong passions, was almost frantic. He refused to receive her farewell—threatened to detain her by force—raved, stormed and even wept! Yes, the crafty, bold, capricious libertine—the man whose cool fortitude had been proverbial in many a circle, whose knowledge of the world, of mankind, and whose power of divining the secret motives of the human heart in spite of a career of dissipation had made him formidable in the intrigues of statesmanship, wept like a baffled schoolboy at the determination of a woman!

But Maria's course was not to be changed. She quitted the Palace with her female attendant, and that night arrived in Venice. On the following day she embarked for England, to

plunge again into the stormy scenes of life ; to appear again in that triumphant beauty which perhaps waning youth made her reluctant to immure ; to rush reckless upon a new career, with no other guides than those which pride and passion might afford her.

CHAPTER IV.

To return to Edward Murray. On being carried into the Inn—on the evening alluded to in a preceding chapter—a surgeon was instantly summoned to his assistance, who on examining the nature of his injuries pronounced them to be serious. He sat up with his patient the greater part of the night, and on visiting him again in the morning, alarmed at the pro-

gress of the fever which Murray's wounds and state of mind had occasioned, expressed a wish that another medical adviser should be called in, and an express was immediately forwarded to London for a surgeon, at that period of the highest eminence in his profession. Mr. Stanley, for such was his name, accordingly arrived, and remained with Murray a considerable part of the day. On leaving him, the more alarming symptoms had been partially subdued, but not sufficiently so to render his further attendance unnecessary.

Day after day Mr. Stanley visited him, and at length Murray began to improve. The surgeon was a kind, humane man, and although as yet ignorant of the real cause of the agony of mind which even more than bodily injury, great as that had been, distressed and agitated his patient, felt a degree of interest in his condition, and sympathy for his evident suffering

which awakened commiseration, and gave his attendance something of the character of friendship.

Murray at length partially responded to this feeling, and the result was that the Surgeon's visits gradually partook of an unprofessional character. Murray was without friends—his dearest hopes on earth had been rudely crushed—his soul sickened at the contests of the world, and he determined to abandon it.

As yet the Surgeon was even ignorant of Murray's story. One day he acquainted him with it, and intimated moreover his determination to seclude himself for ever from the world.

Murray's shattered fortune almost required such a course even had not his feelings dictated it. The kind heart of Stanley still clung to his patient, and he proposed to receive him under his own roof as a boarder. He was married but childless—and glad to welcome

such a companion. Matters were speedily arranged, and in a few days the broken-hearted invalid took up his abode in the surgeon's house in London which stood in a quiet street leading from the Strand. And here Murray enjoyed the double advantage of solitude and society. His illness had dispelled the fierce acrimony of his previous passion—it had sank his spirits, and made him rather disposed to suffer than avenge. It had effected a change in his whole nature, and subdued the turbulence of his mind to settled melancholy—he was but a wreck of his former self and had no other wish than to be considered as having parted for ever from the world.

He wrote to his aunt and sister, his only relatives alive, acquainting them of his retreat and his resolution to remain in it, and conjuring them as they valued his happiness not to intrude upon him, but to consider him as one

whose earthly hopes were wrecked, and who had suffered too acutely even to bear the condolence of those whom still he loved; as one who was dead to the world—banished from it by injuries too deep to be forgotten—who had no sympathy with aught that pertained to it, and whose only desire was to be permitted to end his days in peace.

And so Murray lived. The London seasons went and came—the whirl of gaiety was renewed, but he was forgotten. Another occupied his mansion—his horses, carriages, all were now in other and far scattered hands—he was one of those who seemed to have belonged to another era; the present knew him not. There were some indeed who remembered the dark-eyed Beauty who had so suddenly vanished from the circle of fashion. No one had forgotten Maria, but still the present engrossed the mind. “She was a

beautiful, a glorious being—we shall seldom see her like again—but then she is no longer here.” And so runs the world. There was no haughty rival to exult in beauty’s triumph and Calumny and Envy sought out other objects.

Murray continued in the seclusion he had chosen. Books were his only recreation, except the society of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley. Both were assiduous to remove, as far as they could, the gloomy irksomeness of his condition. Mrs. Stanley was a person of quiet and amiable manners, and, like Murray, had suffered bereavment, although of a different nature. She had been the mother of two sons and a lovely girl; and now was childless. Death had aimed his shafts at their little hearth, and the loss of one child was rapidly succeeded by that of another.

In one short winter the sad change

had taken place. The merry sound of young voices was heard no more, the school hours well remembered were neglected now—the going forth—the returning home—the thousand little cares which the mother loves to listen to were ended. Mrs. Stanley had survived the greatest calamity which woman can suffer, it had sank into her heart, and although her afflictions were tempered with a holy resignation, the instincts of a mother's bosom made her feel that she was desolate.

And Stanley himself, although occupied with the busy duties of his profession—although mingling more in the world, and possessed of fewer lonely moments for melancholy thought, was also changed, and from the active and even gay man of enterprize seemed to have assumed another temperament. He had no children to provide for, no little prattlers to cheer him, and gladden his coming home;

the future with him, man as he was, was but a dreary blank ; his very hopes were blighted in the bud—and all his object, all his duty now on earth, was to do good to those who stood in need of his assistance or whom chance threw in his way.

Such were the couple with whom Murray lived. Time glided by, and in the calm of such retirement he at length began to experience that peace of mind which “the world cannot give.” The kindness of his manners, the once brilliant powers of a highly cultivated mind—his resignation under misfortunes, which of all others are perhaps the greatest for man’s proud nature to bear;—his unaffected piety, and the genuine charity which prevailed his very thoughts, endeared him to his companions, and knit this little circle together by a bond of kindred feeling,

which was not merely felt but acknowledged by all.

Three years Murray lived thus, when an incident as fearful as unexpected once more awakened him to the sorrows of life.

CHAPTER III.

HENRY Morland had returned to England about the same time as Maria. The companion of her guilty flight was never exactly ascertained ; by some it was considered to have been Sir Wyndham Fletcher, and by others—(among whom were her husband and his relatives) it was supposed to have been Morland.

With his usual wayward character he had lingered abroad for two years; he had travelled over most of the Southern countries of Europe, and kept up but little correspondence with his native land. Yet he had learned that Lucy Murray was still unmarried, and since her sister-in-law's indiscretion, that she had resided in comparative seclusion with her aunt, at some distance from London. Morland besides chagrin had almost felt indignant at the strange coldness manifested towards him by one whom he had met in all the open-hearted sincerity of friendship, to say nothing of affection;—he was angry with Lucy, and although mortified at her conduct, was slow to attribute it to caprice alone. He still deemed some misunderstanding, some supposed slight, had been its cause;—like all other men he was more disposed to believe that his failure to obtain the partial smile of beauty, was owing rather

to his want of good fortune, than want of merit.

And there was something too in Lucy's unqualified dislike to his society, which seemed to betray anger, hate, indignation—stronger emotions than mere disregard;—and he was convinced that he laboured under some imputation which made him displeasing in her eyes.

But then Morland was unconscious of having done aught to give her offence; he was therefore, as has been already said, angry, as well as chagrined, at her conduct. Absence and the interval of time respects actions more than persons—that is to say, the impression of the former often increases while that of the latter fades away. We are more apt then to think kindly of those who loved us, than of those whom we have loved in vain—the actions of those to whose real character affection might

have once rendered us blind, can now be submitted to a scrutiny which the heart would then have rebelled at;—the film falls from our eyes—we can hold self-communion, and even admit to the council the feelings which governed us before.

And so Morland felt. The more he thought upon Lucy's conduct, the more unjustifiable did it appear; the longer he kept absent the more did her immediate influence pass away; and as this became weakened Morland became more and more convinced he had been treated shamefully—but also less disconcerted about the matter. And this was really one reason why he had continued so long abroad. He had passed from scene to scene, visited the Peasant in his cot, and the Noble in his palace; had appeared at Courts, and dwelt with Monks on the mountains of classic ground; he had spent his time rather listlessly, than in the

pursuit of any object, and now when he returned to England, he was equally without an aim.

He resolved once more to visit Lucy. He did so, and found her alone. Two years had improved her appearance ; from a retiring girl she had become a lovely woman. There was a pensiveness in her countenance which shewed the frequent presence of mental suffering—and a calmness in her soft blue eyes that denoted sorrow.

Morland was struck with her appearance and secretly felt he should be her slave again. But her manner was the same as before—the same shrinking coldness—the same uneasiness in his society—the same evident wish to repel even the language of friendship ;—the same sudden angry flashing of the mild blue eyes, and mantling blush to the pale cheek on the slightest reference to those feelings of re-awa-

kened attachment which he could not wholly disguise;—all was as of yore—cold, repulsive and impatient of his presence.

Morland parted from her with the same feelings as those with which two years ago he had left England. Nay, they were now increased. He fretted with himself to divine by what cause this singular abhorrence of his society had been occasioned—what he had done or said—what action of his life was capable of having been misconstrued into injury or offence; but in vain—and angry with himself and all the world, he resolved for ever to abandon a foolish attachment, which commenced in the very levity of thoughtlessness, but had ended in perplexity and sorrow.

But this resolution was poorly kept. In a short time Morland again found an opportunity of seeing Lucy, whose manner towards

him however seemed to increase in coldness at every visit. The report of her brother's death, and that of Maria's indiscretion prevented him from alluding to either; and with those who do not willingly add their quota to conversation, intercourse must naturally be restrained and oppressive. Morland felt it to be so—yet with the natural impetuosity of his character he forgot the usual forms of society so far as to reproach her for it. He went farther—heedless of her burning cheek and the hopelessness of his passion, he avowed—he told her that he loved her—that his happiness was destroyed by her ill-disguised repugnance to his society,—that some one must have poisoned her ear regarding him—for he was convinced such sudden and continued antipathy could not have been occasioned by any ordinary cause; that his long friendship for her brother (here Lucy shuddered) his long acquaintance with herself

—the intercourse which had once subsisted between their families ought at least to have procured him the privilege of a friend, if her other feelings denied him the character of a lover;—he lost command of his reason for the time—and vented a torrent of passionate reproaches, mingled with tender and even eloquent allusions to the happiness of former years.

Lucy when her surprise was over, heard him calmly, but at length she too seemed to have suddenly become infected with the same spirit. She grew as indignant as the other was excited, and with a heaving bosom and sparkling eyes, answered his reproaches with charges of perfidy and insult; even the very language which now he used, she told him, shewed him to be dead to every feeling of virtue and honour—that it outraged not only the ordinary forms of politeness but betrayed

an abandoned heart;—that she could not restrain her indignation to reply in measured terms to an offence which it was as impossible not to resent as not to feel—and that she begged their present interview might be the last.

Morland was still in the dark, but her manner shewed him that her sentiments were sincere. His anger, his reckless excitement, was at once dissolved and it was with a subdued aspect and in a humbler tone that he begged her to explain the import of the charges she had made.

But this only increased Lucy's indignation. It looked in her eyes like hardened and crafty guile; and while she continued to reproach him with all a woman's bitterness, a tear started to her eye that told the heart regretted that Henry Morland was unworthy of its sympathy.

But it was no moment for explanation or reconciliation, and Morland quitted her presence under an interdict never to enter it again. Grieved, perplexed and wretched, he left town abruptly, and retired to his country seat

CHAPTER IV.

THERE were few more unhappy hearts in England than that of Lucy Murray. She loved—had loved almost ere she knew what the passion was, him whom her reason and feelings as a sister made her look upon with abhorrence ;—whom she regarded as the worse than murderer of her kind, and noble hearted

brother ;—whom she believed to have been the seducer and companion of Maria.

But it is no more in our power to cease to love, at the command of reason, than to obey when its mandate is to love. Dear as may be the feelings which are outraged by it—disgraceful in our own mind as passion so directed may be, we can as little influence our sympathies by our wishes, as we can create realities by our visions of hope.

Lucy loved in spite of all—and was wretched on that account ;—she was indignant at her lover, and angry with herself ;—she shuddered at the bias of her own thoughts—to her it seemed like treason to her brother—a crime the most heinous and unnatural, which a sister could commit.

Her health sank under these harrowing thoughts ;—she shrank from entering into scenes of gaiety although those who witnessed

her condition recommended such a course ; she brooded over her sorrows in solitude, they were of a nature that refused sympathy, no one divined them, but all who saw her—saw that she was sinking under them.

The Summer passed—the Winter came, and the sweet Spring began to smile again ; and still Lucy Murray continued in the same state ; enfeebled in body and unhappy in mind. Her features became moulded into an expression of sadness, there was sorrow even in her quiet tread ; the light joyous step was seen no more—the silvery laugh of gladness no longer heard ; the pages of the poet and romancist which formerly she would read with enthusiasm to her aunt and the few friends who formed their sequestered society, were unopened now. Her harp stood neglected—her piano untouched, and the sound of music which had used to give a glad cheerfulness to the old country seat, and blend merrily with the ploughman's whistle in the neighbour-

ing fields, was heard no longer, a blank, a gloom had fallen over all. Lucy's cheek was pale, and her blue eyes lustreless; the spots she had used to frequent were visited no more—the garden she had used to tend was unheeded now—she sank into that morbid melancholy, the most dreary state of human existence;—when we live without aim and without hope; when there is no happy period in perspective—no object to be gained—when life is but a barren waste, bounded by a sepulchre.

Lucy had loved Henry Morland fondly—the innocent passion had grown with her increasing years. From the early age of happy girlhood—she remembered the graceful youth who every Summer came down to her father's decayed but hospitable mansion, and in the presence of those of riper years and of beauty too, would still converse with her, and shew courtesy and kindness to the neglected girl.

And was this forgotten? Had Lucy ceased

to remember him whose smile had made her young heart bound? Had she even forgotten the many slights from others which sunk into her bosom then? No, Lucy had not forgotten—she had given him all she possessed—a generous and a grateful heart. He had been the idol of her early years; absent as he was—broken as had been the intercourse between her brother and himself—forgotten perhaps by him as she had been, Lucy had never ceased to love him.

Bitter was the hour in which they met again. She saw as he sat at the Opera by another's side that his heart was already surrendered to a guilty passion—she marked his flushed cheek, his sparkling eyes, and the look of intense homage with which he regarded her brother's wife; and that hour made poor Lucy wretched.

Darker events hurried on with more appalling suspicions in their train; the catastrophe the

reader already knows ;—it was felt acutely by Lucy, for to her the calamity was a double one—she saw her brother dishonored and dishonored as she believed by the man she loved.

He had returned and declared an attachment the avowal of which two years before would have made her happier than tongue could tell ; but now ! it was the cruel probing of an unhealed wound—an outrage to the feelings of a sister and a woman.

Yet still Lucy loved !—but it was a passion which was consuming her—poisoning the springs of all earthly happiness—and even those of life itself.

Day by day her illness encreased. Her aunt became alarmed, and partly on account of his reputed skill, and partly on account of his connexion with her brother, Mr. Stanley was called in to attend her.

He quickly discovered that Lucy's illness was

of a nature to which no physician could administer a cure ; that the rooted sorrow which had sank into her heart could not be plucked out by medicinal skill—that his utmost efforts could only be to repel or impede the ravages whose source (a mind diseased) he had no power to reach.

Yet with the genuine kindness of his nature Stanley strove to ascertain the secret grief which preyed upon his patient's mind. His manner towards her was sincere, and marked with something of a father's concern—he frankly told her, he saw some unconfessed cause of suffering was hastening her to an early grave ; and heedless of Lucy's disconcerted looks continued an inquiry which he deemed his duty as her brother's friend.

Sickness—lassitude of body and mind, the respect which she bore to Stanley, and gratitude for his evident concern and friendship for

herself, induced Lucy half to divulge one day what the secret of her sorrow was.

But these are confessions which do not admit of reservation. The ice once broken, Stanley continued his inquiries until he heard with concern and astonishment from the trembling girl, that she loved the man who was supposed to have been the author of her brother's wrongs.

So closely was Stanley knit with Murray in the bonds of friendship, that his feelings, after their first astonishment had subsided, changed to something like indignation at what he heard. And it was not until Lucy's tears revealed the anguish of her own heart, that he remembered what was owing to one who had so confidently reposed in him the most cherished secret of woman's bosom.

He attempted to rouse her from the influence of an attachment which she herself felt to be

disgrace—to awaken her to a sense of what she owed herself and the brother whom she loved ; —to dispel a phantasy which if permitted to go on, would add another victim to the destroyer of her brother's peace.

Lucy heard him and promised to do as he advised ; but the long drawn heart-sick sigh, and the tears that still trembled on her silken lashes shewed Stanley that duty and affection were here opposed.

Lucy's illness received neither check nor abatement. The ravages of a broken heart were fast drawing her towards the grave. She had outlived all that made life desirable, and the prospect of death was no painful thought ; Stanley at her request concealed her confession from her brother—as well as intelligence of another and more painful kind.

This was renewed reports concerning Maria. It was said that she had returned to England and mortgaged her estate—and after removing

to Paris and living there for twelve months a life of gaiety and dissipation, had come back to London where her course now was one of reckless error.

These were the rumours—by some they were repudiated, but by the many, they were believed.

CHAPTER V.

It was the twilight of a July evening ; Stanley had finished for the day, the laborious duties of his profession, and had come home to the welcome society of his wife and friend.

Murray had laid aside his books and Mrs. Stanley while seemingly she plied the " needle's busy task" was careless of her occupation, and ever and anon looked up with a cheerful smile

and joined in the conversation of the gentlemen.

A loud knocking at the street door startled the little party and in a moment afterwards a servant entered the room with a hasty message, requiring Stanley's immediate attendance at a house in an adjoining street (the reputation of which was more than doubtful) to see a lady whom it was conjectured was suffering from the effects of poison. The Surgeon instantly rose and was hastening away, when his wife in a half playful manner, made some objection to her husband attending patients in such a well known haunt of profligacy.

"Come," said Murray in the same tone, "Stanley shall suffer no harm. I will accompany him."

"Let us go, at once then," said the Surgeon, "delay in a case like this may be fatal."

So saying they quitted the house together. That to which they proceeded was first rate of its class, the temple of every guilty pleasure,

and the rendezvous alike of the gambler, and the fashionable roué. It was brilliantly lighted up and from the exotic-filled balcony, sounds of music, and the "laughter that is not mirth," were heard by the passers by.

Stanley and his friend entered the house and ascended the noble staircase. On a sofa in an apartment whose walls yet echoed to the sounds of revelry, lay extended a still lovely woman. One hurried glance sufficed to shew the description she bore in the world's eye. Around her stood a group of frightened females of different grades, but of the same unhappy calling, as herself administering such assistance as their terror would allow. Murray started back and stood aghast, for in that pale and distorted countenance, where the damps of death had already gathered, deeply as it was impressed by the seal of guilt, he recognised—Maria!

Heedless of the situation of his friend, Stanley instantly resorted to every means that

medical skill could devise to arrest the progress of the fatal drug ; but it was unavailing ; the insidious poison was circulating already through every vein, and fast sapping the foundations of life. Convinced of this he desisted from attempts which only added unnecessary torture to the dying moments of the sufferer.

“ Hush ! hush ! ” she whispered writhing on the couch. “ I am with you dear father ;— Why do you turn away your eyes ? it is your own Maria. Ha ! that ghastly smile ! poisoned ! Who dares say so ? ” continued the wretched woman starting up and turning her frenzied eyes on the panic-stricken attendants. “ Yet look on me, kiss my brow once more—as in the happy days of girlhood. Ah ! the touch is ice ; there was burning at my heart—but now that is cold, cold as thine own my father.”

Murray rose from a chair into which he had unconsciously sank, and with tottering limbs, that almost refused him support, dragged him-

self to the couch on which she lay. She saw him, and uttering a shriek that rang through the apartment, and curdled the blood of all who heard it ; covered her eyes with her hand, and remained motionless, as though the last pang was over. Then suddenly awaking, as if from some fearful dream she clasped her hands in an imploring attitude as she gazed with the glance of frenzy on her husband !

“ Spare me,—oh ! spare me, Edward. I caused your death—but I *sorrowed*, I grieved for it. Be merciful and spare me.—See ! my father stands there cursing me in his shroud ; be not *you* also my accuser. Nay, touch *me* not. It has the chill of the grave !”

“ Maria,” said the heart-stricken man, in a low trembling voice, as he knelt beside her, “ fear not to look on *me*, I am no spectre risen from the grave to reproach you, but your husband, your friend—whom chance has conducted hither, to speak peace and forgiveness. Yes,

Maria, forgiveness! Oh, Stanley," continued he turning to his friend who stood in mute astonishment at what he heard; "save her, save her, she has erred most deeply, but—I love her still." And Murray, blinded by his tears, bent over the corpse-like features of his guilty wife, and frantically kissed the pale, cold lips.

The wretched woman turned her eyes on Murray with a glance of consciousness and recognition; the light of reason brightened them for a moment—but it was the flash that precedes dissolution; as half springing from the couch she flung her arms convulsively round the neck of him who knelt beside her; and ere the by-standers could release the fainting husband from that embrace, the Spirit of Maria had passed into the presence of Him who gave it.

The solution of the dreadful catastrophe was soon given, the wretched woman had learned in that scene of profligacy, from some of her

associates, that Sir Wyndham Fletcher had returned to England, and was living with some fairer rival; the story was the mere invention of her envious companions, but its consequences were fatal.

Stung with jealousy at the supposed infidelity of the man whom in her heart she still loved, and urged to madness by bitter reflections; in a moment of rashness the unhappy victim of her own passions, swallowed a drug which she had long carried about her person, for the purpose of self-destruction, when life should cease to charm.

Under Stanley's direction after an inquest had been held, (the verdict returned being "Insanity,") the body of Maria was removed to his house; and from thence in a plain and unostentatious manner the remains of the last descendant of the proud line of De Courcy were carried to the grave. A Will, executed some months previous to her death, was

found bequeathing the wreck of her once princely property to Sir Wyndham Fletcher.

Murray followed the remains of his guilty wife to their last resting place. *Then*, and not till then, when all the duties of respect and decency had been performed, did the broken-hearted mourner sink under the accumulated burden of his woes. Nature could endure no more, and Murray was laid on the bed of dangerous sickness. The attention of the Stanleys was unremitting, and the kind-hearted Surgeon took this opportunity of again uniting in bonds of intercourse, the sufferer and his sister. Murray consented to see her—and Lucy joyfully obeyed the summons.

Time brought healing on its wings, and Murray arose once more as it were from the bed of death. But how changed ! The furrows of years were on his brow—and the snow of age upon his head ; sorrow had gone before the steps of

Time, and done its work. His eye was cold and mournful, and even the society of those enduring friends—brought no solace to his bosom.

CHAPTER VI.

THE events recorded in the preceding chapter although fearful in their effects on Murray, had been productive of happier consequences to his sister.

Every arrangement respecting Maria, had been left by Murray to his friend; and when the Will was found, Stanley, with that delicacy of feeling he had ever displayed, concealed

the circumstance of the bequeathal of the property in favor of Sir Wyndham Fletcher, from the already sufficiently humiliated husband. But while it implicated Sir Wyndham it removed impressions unfavorable to Morland; and in this Stanley rejoiced. As soon therefore as he had made himself certain of Morland's innocence, he spared no pains in convincing Lucy also, of her lover's true character; despite the anxiety she felt on her brother's account—despite her constant attendance on his sick bed, the bloom of health began to return to Lucy's cheek—and the light of hope to her eye. And Stanley's generous bosom exulted in the effect which his communication had produced on the mind of the sorrow-stricken girl. When he first sought an interview to break this happy intelligence to Lucy, the flush went and came upon her cheek, and her bosom heaved with undisguised emotion;

as the explanation proceeded, she leaned exhausted on the sofa (for Lucy was still an invalid) and bent her head and wept. But they were not tears of sadness she then shed ; —and worlds could not have purchased the transport of that happy hour ! Stanley quitted not her presence till he obtained her permission to write to Henry Morland ; he then departed with feelings of more genuine pleasure than the heartless can ever experience, at their own advantage.

The good Surgeon's letter was answered in person by Morland, who repaired to town on the instant of its receipt. All was explained and Morland was again at Lucy's feet, a suppliant, but now an emboldened one. And two happier hearts beat not that day in the sun's wide circuit ; each sought forgiveness of the other ; the coldness—the estrangement of years was forgotten—and the path of

life, for them at least, seemed strewn with roses.

By degrees as he recovered, Murray was made acquainted with Morland's innocence. They met as brothers ; for Murray placed his sister's hand in that of his early friend—and bade him “ love and cherish her.”

A twelvemonth had passed, when in the daily papers the following advertisement appeared. “ If the husband of Maria Murray, now deceased, whose maiden name was De Courcy, of Lynwood Hall, in the County of ——shire is alive, or in case of his decease, his next of kin will apply at the office of Messrs. Sharpwit and Gullem, Solicitors, Grays Inn ; they will hear of something to their advantage.”

It was now that Stanley first disclosed the history of Maria's will to her husband ; and with great reluctance on the part of Murray, prevailed on him to notice the advertisement.

On enquiry being made at the office of the Solicitors, it was found that it emanated from the executors of Sir Wyndham Fletcher, whose death had taken place a few months after that of Maria ; and that by his Will he had not only left all she had bequeathed to him, but the whole of his own ample property to her husband in the event of his being alive, (which Sir Wyndham believed from report to be the case,) or in that of his decease to Murray's next heir.

Gladly would the injured husband have declined such a bequest ;—but his friends would not permit it. Sir Wyndham had died a bachelor, having himself no relatives ; and Murray unwillingly became again the possessor of a princely fortune.

It was a calm autumnal evening, and the quiet village of D—— as it stood in its peaceful valley, looked beautiful in the sunset from the

hanging slope, from which a little group consisting of two ladies and three gentlemen were contemplating its loveliness. It seemed the very holiday of Nature and repose. The low breath of the air passing through the foliage of the majestic trees, that skirted the village, was all that disturbed the silence; occasionally indeed the wind wafted to the ear, the ripple of the waves on the distant shore of S * * * Bay, and if the mind of the gazer dwelt too fondly on this peaceful spot, that sound brought thoughts of other lands, and the whole earth became contemplated in a more comprehensive view. If any thing in nature could "minister to a mind diseased," this delightful scene must have effected it. The lofty spire of the village church pointing to the calm deep sky, seemed a fitting emblem of religion; while the setting sun glancing on its stained windows, and unostentatious walls, and falling in lines of golden

light on the grave-stones that surrounded them, seemed like the hopes of the Christian to penetrate beyond the tomb. A recently erected row of plain, but substantially-built Alms-houses for aged females, filled up the picture of the scene.

The eyes of one of the party already named, rested with a mournful yet gratified glance on the line of alms-houses. "Another proof my friend," said Stanley to Murray, (for the reader will have recognised the group) "of the munificence of your charity; they are indeed beautiful. Chaste, yet classical;—handsome, yet without pretension. Not a palace—or a poor-house—but just such a home as should shelter Life's wearied pilgrims in the evening of their days."

A tear stood in the eye of Murray, he pressed the speaker's hand for a moment in silence: "It is the fittest monument," at length

said he mournfully—"to her, to whose memory my heart has consecrated it. Poor lost Maria ! I would not mock thy memory with "storied urn and animated bust." May this humble offering in the sight of Heaven, cover though it cannot erase the multitude of thy sins."

He turned from the spot and walked slowly on ; his friends followed him in silence.

Before the door of Murray's residence a traveling carriage was standing ; it waited to convey Morland and his bride, whose hand he had that morning received from her brother, from Murray's lonely home. It was in the neighbourhood of Lynwood, but sufficiently removed to banish the constant presence of bitter remembrance. This was his choice, and he frequently paid a solitary visit to that lordly but now deserted mansion. He declined the kind offer of Stan-

ley, who had now quitted his profession, to reside in the same village with him after Lucy's marriage ; preferring the solitude of his own thoughts to be only occasionally broken by visits from his friends, to more frequent intercourse with them. Thus he dwelt; and in the personal superintendence on deeds of charity, and the uniform duties of religion, found his only solace from sorrow, and experienced that 'peace of mind which passeth all understanding.'

Reader ! whose eyes wander over this history, in mockery perchance of its truth ; suppress thy smile of incredulity and learn—it was sketched from fact. May its perusal teach thee to look into thine own heart, and if thou knowest its affections are gone forth on an unworthy object, call them back, while thou hast yet power. Yield not to the fascination of the senses,—till reason has sanctioned thy choice. Remember that :—

"Souls were never made for eyes to read,
And *there* lies woman's beauty."

Had Edward Murray done so, his happiness and honor would not have fallen victims to the fatal consequences of his First Brief.

CHRONICLE THIRD.

THE DEBTOR'S WIFE.

THE DEBTOR'S WIFE.

**"If she cannot check the tempest's course
At least she'll point a shelter from its force."**

"WHY, George! how pale you look this evening," said Mrs. Mordaunt, as her husband entered the elegant little boudoir in which she was sitting engaged on some fancy work; **"but 'tis always thus when you stay so late in the city. Its very air seems to infect you with gloom and ennui!"**

"Do not abuse the city," said Mr. Mordaunt

with a melancholy smile, "my dear Mary, since it affords you so many luxuries. See," he continued, unfolding a paper, "here is an Opera Box at Mrs. Mordaunt's service for this evening; but I suppose she will not use it, as it was given by a citizen!"

The lady smiling met the lips that jested thus with a kiss, and the next hour saw Mrs. Mordaunt seated beside her husband, in one of the best boxes at the Opera. In the course of the entertainments several friends whom Mordaunt knew in the house (though strangers to his wife) visited their box; and at the commencement of the Ballet, he quitted his station beside his wife with two young men; saying he should just take a turn in the lobby; leaving her under the care of Lord Star, (one of the strangers who had entered) for the brief interval of his absence. Lord Star was a nonentity for which our fore-fathers would have found no name (for the *maccaroni* of "the

olden time" was at least a gentleman;) but we moderns, more cunning at invention, have yclep'd the thing a DANDY. After waving about a well scented cambric handkerchief, and displaying a hand which, from its snowy whiteness and jewelled fingers, might have been mistaken for one of the gentler sex, Lord Star declared, "Pon honour, he was very partial to music—*very*—nothing he liked to hear better, except the conversation of a fine woman."

Having given his quiescent companion this important information, the Lordling was silent, for the best of reasons—he had no more to say!

Two hours had passed since Mordaunt quitted his wife; the entertainments were drawing to a close, and she began to feel vexed and uneasy; when the box door opened, and her husband and his two friends entered. The flushed check and wandering eye of Mordaunt told the mortified wife that his absence had not been unemployed; and his boisterous and sudden

elevation of spirits made her heart swell with vexation and disgust.

Mordaunt insisted that his companions should accompany them home to supper; and with seeming reluctance on their part, from the lateness of the hour and the fear of keeping Mrs. Mordaunt up, they consented. The repast was prolonged to an early hour of the morning, in talking over the merits of the opera; and as Mordaunt, from apparent courtesy, lighted his guests to the door, his wife *fancied* she heard them enter the little library that served for their breakfast room, in which stood a bureau where the private papers and money of Mordaunt were kept.

“George! I do not like those men whom you introduced me to last night,” said his wife to Mordaunt, as they sat at their morning repast, “and I am sure they stayed some time with you, after you left the dining-room; besides, they had evidently led you into no good,

while you left me at the opera with that stupid exquisite Lord Star! I hope in future you will avoid such companions."

"My dear Mary! how many times have you hinted this since last night," replied her husband. "I have assured you we only went to look at the new club-house, of which my friends are members, and certainly *had* a bottle of champagne. Now don't be jealous, Mary, since I was not in the company of ladies."

The next six months from the evening of the opera, saw a sad change both in the manners and the house of Mordaunt! One by one, though almost imperceptibly, its elegant ornaments glided away, under the pretext of being repaired, or exchanged for those of newer fashion; though Mrs. Mordaunt protested she was contented with the old ones. The beautiful time-pieces vanished as if by magic from the marble chimney shelves; the handsome jewels, with which, in the first years of their marriage,

Mordaunt had delighted to deck his wife, grew in his eyes vulgar—or out of date—they must be re-set ; and for *this* ostensible purpose they were taken away.

Gloom and sullen ill-temper sat on the brow of the husband ; anxiety and melancholy on that of the wife. There seemed too an estrangement between them without any apparent cause ; a coldness—a distrust—for which *she* at least could not account. Under one pretext or other Mordaunt was little at home ; and his wife began to feel, though she was ashamed to acknowledge it, even to her own heart, that *she was neglected !* Oh ! hour most fatal to female virtue ; when the heart of woman is made to *feel* this bitter truth ! Then let her pray that the guardian angel who watches over her destiny forsake her not—or she is lost for ever !

One evening as she sat at a late hour awaiting the return of Mordaunt, whose protracted

absences now grew too frequent to create alarm, she was startled from her melancholy reverie by a loud knock at the street door, and the servant entering with a letter. It was from Mordaunt :—he told her in a few hurried lines, he was arrested, and requested she would follow the bearer, with what cash and valuables she could collect in the house, to the place of his confinement.

Too probably at some period of life many of my readers have witnessed the interior of a lock-up-house. There, may be seen congregated under one roof, the dashing Spendthrift, sent in, probably, at the suit of a fashionable tailor for his three years bill ! Look with what impatience he bestrides the narrow pathway of that grated apartment, waiting, with curses on his lips, the arrival of some Shylock, whose “ monies” borrowed at a thousand per cent, are to release him from his “ durance vile” and send him forth again into the world

•

to plunge yet deeper into ruin. There too is the honest but distressed Tradesman, shading his burning brow with his livid hand, and fearing to lift his eye, lest it should encounter those who have known him in happier scenes. There may be seen the fashionable female, whose lapse from virtue renders her hardened to such a scene, taking, with easy nonchalance, her turtle soup and port wine, and ever and anon enquiring as she lifts her eye from the newspaper if her "man of law is come?" In the opposite corner, behold the pale and anxious Wife, with her little basket of refreshments, whispering that consolation which she herself needs to an imprudent, perhaps erring husband; and like "a ministering angel," pouring balm and oil into a wounded or guilty heart. To *such* a scene were the footsteps of Mrs. Mordaunt guided by the bearer of her husband's letter.

And how had Mordaunt's misery and disgrace arisen? He was not extravagant; not a

gamester, in the usual acceptation of the word. That is, he did not frequent the gambling-house or the race-ground—but he did what was far more ruinous, lived on false credit, and was a Bill-accepter, that fearful title, which has reduced half the mercantile families in England to beggary.

We will not pursue the story further. Nor follow the wretched Mordaunt through all the degrading stages and vicissitudes of error, till he became a temporary exile in a foreign land! We will not tell how false friends dropt from him in the bitter hour of adversity—like leaves from the tree beneath the blast of Autumn; all save ONE, who still clung closer to him amid the storm, as the ivy twines fonder round the oak when tempests assail it! And *who* was that faithful one? The Maiden may anticipate—the young Bride may surmise—but the long-wedded Wife who peruses these pages need go no further than her own bosom for reply.

Ten years have passed since the commencement of our tale. In a lovely cottage in the most fertile part of Devonshire, with eglantine twining round its lattice windows, and honey-bees murmuring at its ivied door—retired from the tumults of the world, on a decent competency, gained by honest exertion ; convinced of the former errors of his way, and looking with humble gratitude on the tempests of the past through the sunshine of the present ; surrounded by neighbours who respect them, and happy in each other, Mordaunt and his faithful Mary once more enjoy “ that peace which the world cannot give.” Time has somewhat blanched her cheek, and scattered its early snow flakes amid her raven tresses, but cheerfulness and gratitude beam in her yet sparkling eye, and give it all the lustre of earlier days. She feels that *she* has been the means, under the hand of Providence, of snatching her misguided husband as a “ brand from the burning.” Had

she forsaken him, when other friends fell off, what *now* had he been?—an outcast—a wanderer—beyond the reach of virtue ever to have recalled. But guided, sustained, supported, by those counsels a wife *only* can bestow, he has passed through the valley of evil, and entered on that path which alone, even in this world, can lead to peace;—the path of Rectitude and Honour!

CHRONICLE FOURTH.

THE YOUNG FIFER.

CLASSICAL

THE YOUNG TIT

THE YOUNG FIFER.

“COME hither Jones,” said a young officer to his only remaining comrade who still lingered in the mess-room, as he gazed through the window on the band which had been playing during their dinner hour ; “come hither Jones, and tell me if you see nothing worthy of remark in yonder stripling Fifer ?”

“Not I faith !” answered Jones, sulkily ;

"but you, Beaufort, are for ever springing a mine of conjecture in the face of every beardless lad you see."

"The beard of manhood will never darken that lip," said Beaufort, as he summoned his attendant. "Gregory," continued he to the soldier who entered, "tell Sergeant Crofts to bring the junior Fife-player to my rooms, when the evening muster-roll has been called, and the men have retired to their quarters." The man bowed and withdrew.

"More romance," grumbled Jones, "well, take your own course—you'll get cured in time I suppose."

* * * * *

The young soldier wandered beside the Ganges, to enjoy the fragrance of an eastern night; the stars shone brightly on the stream, and all around breathed peace and harmony. But the thoughts of Beaufort were ruffled, his fancy heated and excited—and still dwell-

ling on the object that had awakened his curiosity.

After vainly attempting to direct his ideas into some calmer channel, he shortened his ramble, and returned to his lodgings. On his entrance he found the old Sergeant and his stripling charge already there. Following the example of the soldier, the youth put his hand timidly to his cap, and saluted the officer as he passed. There was a mingled air of haughtiness and modesty in this simple action, that more than ever aroused the curiosity of Beaufort.

* * * * *

“ Well, at least you will not refuse to accept these few pieces for the trouble I have given you,” said the young officer ; and since you are an orphan, and have only the chances of war to depend upon, when occasion offers, I will not neglect your interests, though I regret you seem so unwilling to own me for a benefactor ;

but I will not further press a confidence so reluctantly yielded."

As Beaufort spoke, he put a little purse filled with gold coin into the hand of the young musician. The pulse that beat hurriedly in that small and delicate hand, as it trembled beneath his touch, found a strange echo in the heart of the romantic soldier. The boy bowed and withdrew with the Sergeant, evidently delighted to escape being further questioned ; but there was a hectic on his cheek, and something like a tear glistening on the dark lashes of his half averted eyes, as he quitted the room, that ministered fresh food to the imagination of Beaufort, during a sleepless night.

* * * * *

"And so your deliverer turns out to be a woman after all, and the very stripling you had such stange fancies about," said Jones one evening as he sat chatting beside the bed of his wounded comrade. "Well! I congratulate

you on so romantic an adventure—"tis just what you have been dreaming of all your life," (the pale cheek of the invalid became tinged with a crimson glow.) Faith, now and what do you intend to do? marry her, I suppose, according to the prescribed rules of romance, and become the father of a race of heroes?"

Beaufort replied not by words, but he raised his dark eyes to the speaker; one glance from those orbs silenced all further enquiry.

* * * * *

Seven years from the date of the preceding discourse, Colonel Jones, who had just returned from India, was invited to dine with his old comrade (now Sir Henry Beaufort) at his beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames. The evening sun was just setting, as the two friends (for though so opposite in their natures they were such), entered an elegant boudoir, which opened by folding doors to a spacious lawn. The dim fading light only served to discover

a graceful female, who rose with smiles to receive them. One sleeping cherub lay cradled on her arm, while another rosy prattler bounded before her steps to welcome his father.

“My Julia,” said Beaufort, “I have brought an old friend and brother officer, who can talk over with you the events of the battle of Bhurtpore.”

Colonel Jones, with the gallantry of a soldier, took the hand that was extended to welcome him; and at Sir Henry's desire conducted his fair hostess to the dining room. But what was his astonishment when the light of the splendid lamp which hung over the apartment falling upon her countenance (which before had only been imperfectly seen through the dusk of twilight) discovered in those features the well-remembered lineaments of the **YOUNG FIFER.**

“Yes,” said Sir Henry, on beholding the wondering gaze of his former comrade, “Yes

Jones, you were right, the romance is wound up, I have married the heroine, and the two urchins you saw just now promise in time to make me the "father of a race of heroes!"

CHRONICLE FIFTH.

W O M A N .

LIBRARY

OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1892-1893

1894-1895

1896-1897

1898-1899

1900-1901

1902-1903

1904-1905

1906-1907

1908-1909

1910-1911

1912-1913

1914-1915

1916-1917

1918-1919

W O M A N.

“ When in despair his scarce uplifted eye,
Sees foes who linger, fancied friends who fly ;
She stems the wave—unshrinking meets the storm,
And wears his guardian angel's earthly form.”

“ Do you think Master will come home to-night,” said a pert-looking abigail approaching the luxuriously cushioned chair, in which Mrs. Montgomery had been listlessly yawning over a book for the last half hour since midnight ;
“ Do you think Master *will* come home ?”

“ I am sure I know not,” was the reply.
“ I neither know nor care,” but the last word was almost inaudible.

“ Well, I expect, for my part, to see Mr. Montgomery brought home dead on a shutter, some of these fine mornings, that’s what I do !” responded the comforting domestic.

“ Very likely Alice ;” and this was the careless reply of one who had been wont, but a few short months before, to listen in breathless expectation for the sound of that returning step, whose footfall was music to her ear ; of her whose bosom had throbbed in agony at the mere anticipation of any ill betiding her husband. Such are the blighting changes coldness and neglect produce in the fondest heart.

The servant again approached and laid a letter on the table ;—“ Captain Clifford’s valet gave me this two hours ago—but I thought I would not bring it you, till Master Robert had gone to bed.”

“ The blush of indignation rose to Mrs. Montgomery’s very temples, at the confidenti-

ally familiar tone of her waiting maid—but the weakness of woman triumphed, and suppressing the burst of resentment which quivered on her lips, she threw herself back in the chair and broke the seal.

It was six in the morning ere Henry Montgomery with a flushed cheek, and an unsteady step entered his wife's chamber; out of temper with himself and the whole world. His losses at play that night had been considerable, and he had recourse to wine to drown the upbraidings of conscience.

The following evening saw Mrs. Montgomery at the Opera; her cheek was paler than usual, and to a close observer traces of tears still hung upon it; but she seemed amused by the scene before her, and not wholly indifferent to the whispers of a handsome looking man in the uniform of an officer, who was leaning over the back of her chair.

"But for my child," half thought, half murmured Mrs. Montgomery, "I would no longer be the neglected being I am."

* * * * *

Entering the usual sitting room, on her return from the theatre, Mrs. Montgomery started back at beholding two vulgar-looking men sitting with her husband, whose pallid countenance and darkened brow betokened the unwelcome reception of his guests. Glasses which had contained spirits and water, stood in confusion on the table, while the whole room bore marks of disorder and vulgar revelry.

"Don't be alarmed, ma'am," said one of the men rising and advancing towards Mrs. Montgomery, "don't be alarmed, it's a mere nothing I'll assure ye; only for sixty pounds, ma'am. "Why bless me," added the speaker to the half stupified Montgomery, "if this here

gentlewoman ain't got enough of finery on her very neck to pay our demand three times over."

The hour of man's adversity is that of woman's triumph, over all the petty feelings that take from the heavenliness of her nature. To unclasp the ornaments from her neck and arms, and fling them towards the bailiff (for such he was) who stood gazing on her, awed into silence by the intensity of her distress, and the resolution of her purpose, was but the work of a moment; as with one convulsive sob Mrs. Montgomery threw herself on the bosom of her repentant husband.

Need we paint the sequel? "None are all evil," and the seeds of virtue which had never been quite crushed in the bosom of Henry Montgomery, sprang up to a goodly harvest.

On the following morning when Captain

Clifford presented himself at Mrs. Montgomery's door, a polite "not at home," awaited him ; and from that hour, Montgomery and his wife were all the world to each other !

CHRONICLE FIFTH.

THE

MILLINER'S APPRENTICE.

THE MILLINER'S APPRENTICE.

CHAPTER I.

"We have no slaves abroad, then why at home?"

COWPER.

It is sad to lose either parent, but that bereavement is the saddest where the orphan is a girl, and left to the guidance of a dissipated father. For her the world has a twofold danger.

Jack Lawrance had spent his youth in the Navy, in which service he attained the rank of

Lieutenant ; but in consequence of some irregularities had been early “ allowed to retire on half pay.” He was handsome and insinuating, and to the joy of his friends, and the surprise of his acquaintance soon after his retirement married a lady of good fortune. It was an ill-assorted union. One daughter, of many children, alone survived the period of infancy, and Mrs. Lawrance died broken-hearted before her child had completed her seventeenth year. But long ere this event, her property had been squandered by the dissipated husband.

We are told of Misers who love gold for its own sake ; for the sake of the very coin without regard to the power and pleasures it commands ;—who gloat their eyes with heaps of treasure, and imbibe a passion for money as in itself the primary as well as the ulterior happiness of life.

History informs us of monsters who have delighted in acts of cruelty when no interest

was to be served, and no passion but that of the love of cruelty to be gratified by such deeds ; and society affords us daily instances of men who are not dissipated from the mere desire of pleasure, but from a love of profligacy—who revel in the most abandoned iniquity, and exult in the consciousness of it. Such a man was Lawrance.

His life had been one scene of warfare with decency and virtue ; not content with being vicious, he was the sworn enemy of all who were not so ; he seemed to possess an inherent antipathy approaching to hatred, against the very semblance of virtue, and insulted and outraged religion from very wantonness.

He was a gambler, a spendthrift, and all that follows in the fearful train that tread on the heels of such vices. He was violent and impetuous, uncontrolled by conscience and unrestrained by fear.

We have said he was handsome; at least in early life, ere guilt had stamped his features with its Cain-like brand;—he was descended from a good family, and even amid the very extravagance of infamy, still preserved something of the “instincts of a gentleman.” Not indeed any of the higher attributes of the character, but that courteous polish of manner which when he chose it, none could better assume.

His wife had led a life of misery. Her nature was gentle and enduring—she had borne all for her daughter’s sake. Long watchings—
—anxious nights—insults—spirit-trying reproaches, which makes Pride rise rebel to Virtue itself. Sunk in the eyes of her early friends, and lessened in the esteem of those who had known her in happier days, from the firmness with which she still clung to a partner so unworthy of her,—poverty—want—humiliation

of every kind, Mrs. Lawrance had meekly endured. But she died at last.

Ellen lacked three months of being seventeen at her mother's death. She had been her only companion, her only solace, and her only friend. Their common calamities had endeared them to each other ;—all the daughter's education had been given her by her mother, and never was a mother's kindness more fondly or more pleasingly repaid. Ellen first laboured to improve for her teacher's sake ;—while yet a child she would look up to her mother's face, and if she saw those soft eyes brightened with satisfaction—her little heart would throb for very joy, and her task would be dear to her because it gave her the means of making her parent happy. But gradually Ellen began to love instruction for its own sake ; and unknown to herself, under circumstances which might have crushed every feeling of emulation, and

amid the cheerless monotony of a wretched home, Ellen Lawrance became graceful and accomplished beyond her years.

And it was this, it was these labours so sweetly aided by her who was the object of them—so well recompensed; it was these occupied hours—this secret gratification so dear to a mother's heart, which had kept the miserable wife from sinking into the grave. But nature will claim its own, and the time came when no mental effort could bear up against decaying strength—a worn out body—and worse than all, a “bruised spirit!” a short illness wound up the secret ravages of years—and poor Ellen was motherless.

Hard as had been her previous lot, it seemed to her as if now for the first time she knew what sorrow really was. Her father for a while after his wife's death seemed calmed down to the decency of sorrow;—he was in some sense the

murderer of the poor wreck that lay reproachless before his eyes ; he had first known her young and beautiful, rich too and with every facility for happiness gladdening her path ; what a sad change had her later years presented, and who had been the cause ? The husband felt for some days at least the gloom of mind which retrospection, even of happiness itself, never fails to bring upon the guilty.

But it was only for a few days—within the week, although his wife's remains lay unburied, he quitted the house ; and meeting some of his companions, under the plea of softning a sorrow, that could not be cured, was easily persuaded to enter again into those scenes of wild riot, which seemed the only element in which he could exist.

And Ellen was left in their humble lodgings with no companion save a woman who since their fallen fortunes acted as a domestic,

and during the day came to do the drudgery of the house. She sat by the coffin that contained her mother's remains—it was winter;—the drizzly rain fell upon the wet tiles of the surrounding houses;—the sky was dull and gloomy—there was cheerlessness on every side.

Evening came on—its dim shadows fell upon the dead; the desolate room in which she sat looked sad and wretched, but not more so than the mourner's heart.

Many a tear that long silent evening did the Orphan shed. Many an hour was remembered in which she had shared a companionship that would never be hers again;—her heart, warm and full of all nature's kindest sentiments, had no object now to rest upon; her father indeed remained—but Ellen only wept the more bitterly when she thought of him.

The day of the funeral arrived—the body was carried away, and Ellen was left again alone ; it was the saddest hour of her life.

On which side so ever she turned her tear-filled eyes, some little memorial of her mother met her view ; there was the chair she was wont to occupy ; the low stool on which Ellen, when a child, had knelt at her feet to lisp her evening prayer ;—the well-worn books which comprised their humble library—the well used work-box—the ticking of the watch that hung over the chimney-piece ; they were all familiar things, and though voiceless spoke as it were of her mother. And where was she ?”

“ Oh ! my mother,” cried the desolate Orphan clasping her hands on her throbbing brow. “ My mother !—would I were with thee in the grave !”

The following day Ellen was equally soli-

tary. In vain she asked her father on his preparing to quit the house, to come early home;—in vain she kept a brightly-burning fire, and although suffering as she was from the deepest grief, arranged the apartment neatly, and placed his chair near the hearth, to welcome his return. She had no money to buy him any little luxuries, but she endeavoured to enhance the poor comforts she possessed. Her heart, in spite of all his unkindness to her mother and herself, yearned with a child's affection towards him still;—he was all that remained to her of friend or kindred, and nature itself called forth a daughter's fondness at a period like this.

And Lawrance came home at last; but not till Ellen had heard the clocks strike three in the silent night; not until worn out with watching she had thrown herself exhausted on a couch which filled up a recess in their

scantily-furnished sitting room, and sunk into a temporary slumber.

She sprang up on her father's entrance;—she was glad to see any face, for the solitude she had endured had been torture in her state of mind;—with brightening eyes she rushed forward to meet him—to clasp her arms round his neck, and weep tears of affection on his bosom.

But an angry expression of surprise made the poor girl pause abashed; an oath followed, and then reproaches why she had not retired to rest? Lawrance was intoxicated—he reeled to a chair—that very chair in which her mother had used to sit, and told her in a harsh but husky voice to bolt the door and retire.

It was in the tone in which a churl would address a dog; it froze the blood in Ellen's bosom, and with a pale cheek and tearful eye

she obeyed. She entered her little dormitory, and in the wretchedness of a desolate heart (in youth the acutest of all sorrows) threw her slight form upon her humble pallet, and wept unrestrained.

The following day brought the same scene; never had a bereaved and sorrowing heart a more dreary period of mourning. She had no companion, no friend, nothing to beguile the heavy hours; no hope to cheer her on to endurance—no object to look forward to;—Ellen had none of these; and it was evident even to herself, that she must sink into wretched apathy, or an early grave.

Her father's tyranny and irregularities increased. He even denied her money for her subsistence, and now uncontrolled by her mother's presence (towards whom, despite all his crimes, he had still observed a certain respect) he introduced some of his abandoned

associates, female as well as male, to that hearth which her mother's memory rendered sacred to the orphan. It almost broke poor Ellen's heart. She would shrink from the society of such guests, to her cold, desolate chamber, and there spend the lonely evening in solitude and tears.

But such a state of existence could not last, and Ellen determined to emancipate herself from a thralldom which was worse than death, and seek a livelihood and a home elsewhere. Her education, refined as it had been, was more calculated to adorn her mind, than confer on her the qualifications of an instructress ; her manners, moreover, although graceful were timid and retiring ; and her gentle nature prevented her from taking an advantageous estimate of her own capabilities. It was only in the humble employment of a needlewoman that Ellen conceived she could earn her bread.

But even the most humble employment for a female is often difficult to be procured. Nothing is more common than to hear an idle lady say, "Sooner than do *that* I would take in plain-work;" or a fine gentleman, "sooner than submit to *this* I would work as a common labourer;" but many a poor sempstress with all her neatness and industry finds it difficult to^t earn a shilling; and many an honest labourer starves.

Ellen made inquiries among the few tradespeople with whom their scanty housekeeping brought her in contact; and after some time learned that Mrs. Skinner, a milliner in the neighbourhood of Regent Street was in want of an assistant. She lost no time in applying for the situation.

The house to which she had been directed was a neat looking residence, with a long, narrow door having a brass plate with "Mrs.

Skinner" engraved thereon, while "Dealer in British Lace," was added in smaller capitals underneath, to convey to the uninitiated some idea of the lady's calling.

Ellen knocked, and was admitted by a smartly-dressed servant boy, who casting a glance at her faded mourning dress, seemed to guess at once the nature of her errand; and, almost ere Ellen had made enquiry for his mistress, shewed her unceremoniously into a dingy, cold room on the ground floor, where he told her that Mrs. Skinner, who was then engaged, would presently see her.

Ellen sat down and looked round the cheerless apartment. The walls were covered with faded paper; the ceiling dirty and the carpet colourless. The furniture was poor and scanty—the grate had no fire in it, the rusty bars and chilly damp of the room, plainly indicating that genial element had long been a stranger there.

After waiting about a quarter of an hour Mrs. Skinner made her appearance. She was a tall, well-proportioned woman, with thin, forbidding features, and a calm, hard voice; well dressed, and about the meridian of life.

Ellen told her on what purpose she was come.—Mrs. Skinner confessed that she wanted an assistant, but ‘one who had been accustomed to the business.’ Of this the applicant professed her ignorance, but offered to do her utmost in what she did know, and to spare no pains in learning what it was necessary to acquire. This Mrs. Skinner said was not what she wanted, but as Ellen seemed so willing to be of service, and had the appearance, moreover, of being a genteel girl, she (Mrs. Skinner) would have no objection to take her as an in-door apprentice, for five years, without a premium,—but of course without giving any salary.

This seemed to be a cheerless alternative to poor Ellen, but what will not a timid girl sacrifice for a quiet home? With man the woes of poverty and the horrors of indigence, in idea at least, differ but in name; but woman although she can bear the one with fortitude, sinks before the other helpless and dismayed. Let her still possess the serene domestic hearth, and the society of those she loves, and poverty may blight her board, and want may haunt her dwelling, yet she will cheer and animate man's sterner spirit,—she will show a moral heroism greater than his own, and take a pride in suffering with him, and a pleasure in ministering comfort to his sorrows, greater perhaps than all the blandishments of fortune could confer. But remove these—send her forth a wanderer, banish her from this gentle sphere in which her happiness and her virtues only truly live, and who is so forlorn as woman? The shrinking fear of such a casualty, is often the cause of

her enduring tyranny which no other dread under Heaven would make her brook.

Ellen did not hesitate. Depressing as was the long period of bondage, she consented to the terms proposed, and the following week, with the ready consent of her father to whom her presence was but a burden and restraint, the Orphan girl began her career of duty, and took up her abode with the Milliner.

And here we must be allowed to digress for a brief space from our story, to offer a few remarks which the subject naturally suggests.

While the christian part of the community, from the Metropolis of England to its most remote village, are busying themselves with the emancipation of slaves abroad, and subscriptions from the Peer to the Mechanic have been raised, for the laudable purpose of putting down many of the minor oppressions that have existed at home ; while the eye of beauty

shines brighter through the tear that is called forth, by contemplating the miseries of the sable being, who in the scale of humanity is both "a man and a brother;" can woman be cold to the sufferings, the privations, and the moral degradation of an humble, but alas! too numerous class of her own sex, or her perceptions closed to the daily sacrifice of white slaves, on the altar of Fashion?

Is the female of high rank, who enters the crowded ball room, or the brilliant assembly, in all the pride of conquest, and the elegance of dress; ignorant that the costume which sets off her attractive person has been probably expedited in its completion, by the midnight toil of some pale, consumptive victim, scarcely entered into her girlhood, beneath the chiding of a task-mistress, little less searing to the mental feelings of her on whom it falls, than

the lash of the Overseer, to the suffering body of the toiling Negro?

Some remedy for the growing evil, some restriction as to the hours of labour of what are technically depominated "Milliners' Fags," ought to be thought of by those, who in this age of general benevolence towards the unfortunate, go about "doing good" and "blush to find it fame."

The ages of the hapless beings, who are thus imolated to the Moloch of Dress-making, generally averages from thirteen to seventeen; precisely that period of life most critical in both a moral and physical sense to a female. Their daily routine of authorised slavery commences at seven in the morning, and they bend over their labours with a few brief intervals to snatch a hasty meal, generally until eleven at night;—but in "the season," as Spring is called in London, their toils fre-

quently do not terminate until long past the midnight hour; and not unfrequently the Sabbath sees these youthful labourers "plying the needless busy task" to finish some heavy order for the ensuing week.

Again (and a worse evil in a moral sense arises) are to be met with about the streets of our over-crowded metropolis, another portion of these poor, pale, worn-out drudges, heart-weary and foot-sore, from the grey of the twilight, when guilt stalks forth, seeking what it may devour, to the dreariness of midnight; plodding along the miry or dusty pavement, with wicker baskets better protected by their oil-skin covers from the weather, than their hapless bearers, conveying home the produce of the labours of those who stand a grade higher, in the avocations and distinctions of the work-room than themselves. The

Haberdasher—the Shoemaker and the Tailor—all employ porters or errand boys, to carry home by *dag-light* the articles they furnish to their customers; it is the Milliner almost without an exception who sends home the produce of her industry at *night*.

Women of England! Contemplate for a moment the too probable fate of these hapless females. Thrust into the very jaws of temptation, in the heart of a corrupt and populous city, what would be *your* lot, if exposed to similar trials? Think of the damp—the cold—the fogs of our variable climate;—scantily glad as they always are, with perhaps an old shawl thrown loosely round their shoulders, a thinly covered bonnet, the faded remnant of the last year's show-room the only protection for the head;—ill shod, and poorly fed,—these tender blossoms from the same parent tree as

yourselves, are sent forth to brave "the pelting of the pitiless storm."

Is it a matter of wonder then if nature and better feelings, sometimes, (alas ! too often) yield to those temptations, which are ever ready to present themselves to the unprotected female ?

Britain has emancipated the black slaves of the West Indies ; has raised her voice, and that voice *will* be heard, for the pale victims of her Factories at home ;—has reduced the danger of the Climbing-boy to a mere mechanical process ;—and shall no effort be made to ameliorate this worse than Egyptian bondage ? This slavery which loudly cries for the strong arm of legislative power to soften if not entirely annihilate it ; this system more odious and demoralising to the female than the lash of the plantation tyrant, or the despotism of the Factory overseer. The lives of these young

creatures must not be sacrificed, nor their minds left barren wastes, for the seed of corruption to take root and spring up in.

The daughters of our aristocracy, the *elite*, the high-born and the noble of our land, who are "The Glass of Fashion" to the less elevated ranks of society, must not encourage the avarice of those who make a profit by the labours of these children of Poverty, in supplying the hurried demands of wealth and luxury;—their liberty and chastity must not be weighed as mere dust in the balance against the expedition with which a ball-dress must be furnished, or an opera mantle manufactured.

Let not our line of argument be misunderstood; or our appeal seem to advocate the cause of idleness. That man (and involved in his doom *woman* also) must labour, and in the "sweat of their brow eat bread;"—that

there must be "hewers of wood, and drawers of water," in all states and countries, is the universal decree; but let the labour be proportioned to the labourer; let the hours of Milliners' assistants be restricted to the same period at least as those of the mechanic, nor condemn the weaker sex to bear the heaviest burden.

But to return to our Story.

Mrs. Skinner's establishment was an extensive one. Her customers consisted chiefly of the nobility, and the higher orders of gentry who take their rank, next to the nobility, in the aristocracy of Fashion. Mrs. Skinner had ten "young ladies" and a forewoman, living in her house, of various ages from sixteen to twenty-five. Poor, harrassed, tortured creatures! cruel and unnatural was their condition. At seven in the morning they had to appear in the close, unhealthy workroom, the

windows of which were never allowed to be opened for fear of the black flakes which float in a London atmosphere injuring the delicate materials in the course of preparation. At eight they partook of a miserable breakfast and resumed their labours, which, allowing two other short intervals during the day for meals as scanty as the leisure permitted to them, they continued until nine, ten, and not unfrequently until midnight; when they again sank toil-worn on their pillows to awaken to a repetition of the same cheerless round of drudgery.

Ellen was soon initiated into the duties of her new life, and with feelings still sad and oppressed by her mother's death, lived amid strangers with no one to pity or condole her. It was "The London season," that is to say, the end of April; the town was full; the Drawing-rooms, the Opera, Concerts and Balls occupied

the gay hours of the fashionable world; and sometimes before any especial entertainment the apprentices would have to sit up nights together to finish "an order."

Poor Ellen worked unmurmuring with the rest, she had found a home indeed, but it was only a shifting of the dark scenes of misery.

Yet she laboured diligently; was obliging to her companions, and did all in her power to merit the approbation of her mistress. In this she partially succeeded, for Mrs. Skinner could be pleased when it was her interest to be so. By an arrangement made at the commencement of her servitude, at her own request, Ellen was allowed to go home every Saturday night, and spent the following Sunday with her father;—at least as much of the day as he chose to be at home. But the place had associations that were dear to Ellen. Her lost parent still seemed to hover over

it—and many, many an evening did the motherless girl return wearied from her weekly task, to throw herself down upon the couch on which her mother died, and weep—and think of her!

It was often Ellen's duty, as one of the younger apprentices, to carry the work home from the Milliner's to the houses of her customers. This was a disagreeable task, for it had always to be done at a late hour, and many a cold winter's night had she, after a day of hard and incessant toil, to walk to some remote part of London alone and unprotected. It exposed her to many an insult, but Ellen bore it all, although the sensitive delicacy of her nature, made this task the most irksome of her lot.

One night when she was returning at a late hour down the New Road, having been to carry some dresses to the residence of a lady in the

Regent's Park, she was accosted by two young men who seemed bent upon persecuting her. They followed her for some distance, and at last one of them who appeared to be flushed with wine and folly, forcibly prevented her progress. Alarmed and trembling from head to foot, Ellen in vain endeavoured to make her way, when at that instant a gentleman, who was proceeding in the opposite direction, came hastily up, and witnessing her agitation as well as the offensive intrusion of her assailants, interfered at once and demanded by what right they ventured to obstruct her progress? Ellen instinctively clung to his arm, the offenders, conscious of being in the wrong, skulked off, and the gentleman found himself alone with her, whom his timely presence had rescued from further insult.

A lamp near the path where they stood revealed their features to each other. The stranger stood for a moment in mute admiration of the

mild beautiful features which beamed upon him with eloquent gratitude, while Ellen could not but perceive that her protector was handsome, graceful and had that indescribable aspect which betrays the gentleman. A few words sufficed to explain the annoyance which had been offered to her, and to express her thanks to him for having rescued her from it.

But her deliverer insisted on seeing her home; it was Saturday night, and she was going to the abode of her father; Ellen could hardly object, and in the confidence of innocence, she walked by his side and they entered into conversation. It was a calm and lovely night. The moon rode proudly in the Heavens, and the stars trembled with a brightness and beauty that made the earth look glad. They had nearly two miles to walk—and the longer they were together the less they regretted the length of the way. Ere they parted, the stranger almost unknown to herself had learned

from Ellen nearly her whole history, and had expressed his intention of visiting her on the following day.

And he kept his word. He called and saw her father, who from politeness rather than any real gratitude he felt for the rescue of his child, was profuse in thanks to their newly made acquaintance. Two hours passed pleasantly away. The stranger informed Ellen that his name was Charles Benfield, and that he was a clerk in a Merchant's house in the city.

But there was something in his air and manner that to an acute observer would have betrayed a higher rank than that he assumed. Ellen, however, remarked not this, she was too much delighted with his conversation to make nice enquiries as to the truth of what he had said; and they parted with permission asked and granted, to meet again. Weeks, months, passed thus. Every Sunday Charles Benfield was with Ellen—and happiness once more

brightened her soft eyes although the bloom of health had faded from her cheek. Anxiously was every Sunday looked for by the desolate girl, it was a prospect which afforded a balm for all her sorrows through the week, and lightened the burden of her weary toil. And Sunday after Sunday came and whether the day was wet or sunny, stormy or fair, Charles Benfield never failed to meet Ellen with his gladsome smile of greeting, and to receive hers of happy welcome in return.

CHAPTER II.

THERE is no feeling more agonizing to woman's heart, than the belief that he she loves looks upon the attentions which he bestows on her in the light of an irksome duty. When affection has been freely and truly given, and when it seems to have been returned—to stop short then, as if the dream were over, is perhaps the only sorrow which she cannot—which she seeks not to brook. The pride of conquest may be humbled

—the rival whom she hates may have been preferred to her—she may have been slighted by those whose love she wished to gain—and her pretension to wit and beauty may have been despised ; she can bear all this, her pride, her self-esteem, even her philosophy weak as it is, all assist her to do so ; but where she has been loved once, to ceased to be loved—to witness the decay of that passion which she had fondly hoped would be eternal, to see that she no longer gives pleasure where before she gave it, and that the homage paid to her is no longer a glad privilege, but a tasteless duty listlessly obeyed—this is what Woman's whole nature rises rebel to. Her heart, her mind—the mystic union of both which form her character, have then no citadel to fly to ; here is the origin of her despair and frenzy—of the madness which has been joined to Woman's name, and of that of which thousands of her sex have perished, that disease which no

physician can eradicate or assuage—a broken heart.

Ellen with uneasy concern, began to feel a nameless dread ;—a secret sense of impending danger ;—as if some calamity was about to fall upon herself and him whose happiness was dearer to her than her own. She had not yet thought of infidelity, of desertion or of caprice in a passion which in her pure bosom was a holy one ;—she saw indeed that Benfield's brow was often clouded, that he seemed to be suffering when in her society ;—but then the tones of his voice when he addressed her were kinder than ever, and if there were no smiles upon his countenance, there was a look of sympathy which was dearer than them all. Still Ellen saw that he was unhappy and felt that unhappiness was connected with herself.

Benfield's manner during the whole period of their acquaintance had been singular.—At

first it had partaken in some measure of the gaiety of the libertine ; this however Ellen's gentle innocence speedily rebuked, and he seemed to delight in her society as that of a sweet but kindred spirit. But now his demeanour had assumed a character which made Ellen unhappy, she knew not why. At length that dread which ever is ready to rise in woman's bosom, half explained the mystery which her reason could not solve. "He loves me no longer !" was the thought which arose in her mind, and the feeling once harboured refused to depart again.

Benfield had never said he loved her—but Ellen had never until now doubted of his love. Their intimacy was not one of mere acquaintance, although no words of passion had been spoken, and no vow or promise proffered or exchanged ; it was the intercourse of heart with heart, the interchange of sentiments and

feelings which need no studied words to express, nor protestations to be deemed sincere.

Her health had been long declining; the daily fatigue she had to undergo was more than her young frame could bear; although the buoyant thoughts which occupied her mind had hitherto disguised it from herself. But she felt it now. When secret grief began to prey upon her mind, her body drooped, as her spirits flagged, and the effect of long days of labour, and short but sleepless nights, became more apparent on her pale cheek when her deep mild eye lost the glad brightness of a heart at ease.

Benfield who seemed to be suffering mentally nearly as much as herself, by degrees began to absent himself from his weekly visits under various pretences. Although there was something in the manner in which he made them, that while they grieved, forbade Ellen even in her heart to chide him for them.

At this period, as if to compensate for the change in Benfield, by one of those unlooked for chances which frequently occur in life, Ellen gained a generous and sincere friend.

One day she was called down into the show-room to assist in arranging some drapery to display its effect on some dresses two ladies were making choice of; after giving the order the younger of the ladies, struck with Ellen's beauty and the mild grace of her manners, entered into conversation with her, when her interest was more excited by the education and superior breeding which her language betrayed. She requested that Ellen might bring the dress home, and desired to see her when she brought it. The ladies were the young and beautiful Lady Frances Milton and her mother.

Mrs. Skinner, fearful of offending her titled customers, though contrary to the general usage of her establishment, not to allow the juniors to wait on customers, permitted Ellen to

comply with this request. The fair aristocrat enquired into her history; Ellen had few arts of disguise and her ladyship soon knew it all. And yet not all, for Ellen breathed not a syllable regarding Charles Benfield, although that era in her young life was perhaps the one that had effected the greatest revolution in her thoughts and feelings.

Lady Frances frequently called at the Mil-liner's—and when ever she did so, invariably desired to see Ellen Lawrance. By her influence Ellen was partially emancipated from the work-parlour, and suffered to attend the lighter duties of the show-room.

Her ladyship was on the eve of marriage; many dresses were ordered, and with them her favorite made many visits to her lovely patroness. One day on going to try on a white satin pelisse, Ellen found a young girl with Lady Frances, whose face, she knew not why, pleased and interested her. Ellen perhaps was not aware

of the intensity of the looks which she directed to the laughing, but beautiful countenance of her patroness's companion, who in the meantime was too much occupied in admiring her friend's new purchases to notice the bearer of them. But when she did turn round and saw Ellen's mild eyes fixed upon herself, with that look which every woman intuitively knows to be one of admiration, she could not suppress another in return. Perhaps she the more readily did so from the impression she saw she herself had created, "I declare, Frances, you are one of the graces," said the Bride-maid elect. "Nay, I must bring my brother up to see a pair of blue eyes as lovely as your own, he is below—I'll run and—"

"Nay, nay, Emily" interrupted the other blushing slightly. "Do not disturb him now, he is engaged with mamma."

"Aye, but I must," continued the laughing beauty. "I am malicious enough to convince

him there are as fine eyes in the world as those of a certain lady." And heedless of her friend's embarrassed look, she left the room, and in a few moments returned, half leading, half-dragging in a young man, whose figure, as it was reflected in a glass before which Ellen was standing, with her back to the door where he entered, made her start, and drop the lace veil she was preparing to throw over the white satin pelisse Lady Frances was trying on. Could it be reality? Did her senses deceive her? or did her failing vision behold Charles Benfield? Ellen stood as if rooted to the spot, while the blood rushed to Benfield's face until his cheeks tingled again.

"Sir Charles Benfield," said Lady Frances, kindly to Ellen, whose agitation she observed, and imputed to the effect of her companion's girlish freak. "Come, you see you are an intruder here Charles," continued his Bride elect, with one of her sweetest smiles; "though

'tis all your madcap sister's fault; and so I must not be too severe on you; but indeed you must leave us;—we are now engaged in a portentous toilet debate—and you know not how fatal this interruption may be to the cause of Fashion.”

Benfield averting his face from Ellen, stammered out some playful remark, and gladly availed himself of the opportunity to escape.

But his sister had noticed his emotion as well as Ellen's. It made the blood creep languidly through her veins—the laugh died away upon her lip—and a sudden damp came over her spirits.

Ellen pleaded a violent headache, and Lady Frances who was far from guessing the real cause that agitated her favourite, suffered her to depart.

It was Saturday night and Ellen with a heavy heart quitted the stately mansion in Belgrave Square, for her humble home. Her mind for

some time seemed stunned—she doubted if what she beheld was reality—if the desolation of her heart was the effect of reason, or a phantom which her imagination had pictured. But the cruel truth of her situation soon dispelled such doubts as these.

Charles Benfield was no longer in her idea even an acquaintance for her ; the only object which in this life her fond heart clung to, had suddenly assumed a form which mocked her former hopes. And she too, the kind and gentle-hearted one, towards whom poor Ellen felt all the gratitude of an ardent heart, she the noble and the good was now, though unconsciously, her “ rival.”

A rival ! Ellen’s humble nature made her blush at the very thought. True she had been deceived, yet the grief she suffered she regarded as a calamity rather than the fault of him who had occasioned it. If he had deceived her, her heart told her that it had been

too willing to welcome the deceit; her whole mind had been filled with sunny prospects, and would not have harboured a doubt that could have dispelled the dream. But it is all over now," sighed Ellen, "Lady Frances is worthy of such a husband; I am poor and humble and may not aspire to such as he."

Yet these reflections could not subdue the pangs that agitated her bosom. Love, hope, all that cheered life had been removed;—she looked forward, and her heart sickened at the prospect; and retrospection now was agony. She reached home. Her father was out, and all was silent and desolate. With tear-filled eyes she commenced her usual task of arranging the disordered room; she brightened up the decaying fire, and then sank down upon her mother's chair, to think over the bitter thoughts which to her had given life itself a new colouring.

On the following day, as she half anticipated Sir Charles Benfield called. His looks were troubled, and it was evident he had been a prey to much uneasiness of mind. Ellen even seemed the calmer of the two.

"I have deceived you, Ellen," said he after he had taken his wonted seat; cruelly deceived you; and yet Heaven is my witness that for the last few months I have never met you without a determination to reveal my real condition. But I wanted resolution. I saw that the disclosure would give you pain, and I put it off from time to time, until chance has discovered it. I know I must appear base in your eyes. And yet I can hardly appear more so than in my own."

"No, no," cried Ellen, "not base! I never could think *that* of you;—you have deceived me, less perhaps than I have deceived myself. But now that I know your rank and condition in life—now," continued Ellen with a faint,

proud blush tinging her pale cheek, "that you are about to become the husband of another—it is not fit that we should meet again."

"Ellen, dear Ellen," said Sir Charles with emotion, "I have done you wrong; but it is in my power in some degree to make atonement. The barrier is now removed which, while you were ignorant of my condition in life, prevented me from offering the means of enabling you to leave your present laborious occupation. I can now do what I have long wished to do—and I hope you will not be too proud to accept it. I have wealth, Ellen, and never could enjoy it while I thought you were in distress. To-morrow I shall order my Solicitor to draw out a deed settling such a provision on you as will—"

But the deep burning blush that crimsoned Ellen's cheek—the sudden brightness of her eyes, and the proud trembling of those lips whose ordinary expression had the sweetness

of a smile made Benfield pause; for he saw he was giving not only offence but pain by what he said.

“I am obliged to you for your offers,” said Ellen in a cold, measured tone, “but they are such as I cannot accept. I do not misconstrue your motives, and I hope you will not misinterpret mine. I am poor, but I am too proud to be a pensioner on your bounty.”

“Nay, now this is unkind of you, Ellen,” said Benfield with a disconcerted air. “I cannot as a man of honour—I cannot in justice to my own feelings—if I *must* plead my cause on no better grounds—allow you to be without atonement for the injury I have done you. Nay, hear me Ellen—I know, I feel, I have done you an injury, although your pride may scruple to own it; I have trifled with sacred feelings—I have allowed myself and you to sink into a delusion which had *you* known of the future what

I then knew, never would have taken place ; I met you as a stranger—I was smitten with your beauty—but the beauty of your mind and character changed every other passion into esteem and regard. I acted criminally in suffering myself to give way to the pleasure I found in your society. Perhaps I should speak more truly if I used another name for the feeling that swayed me—but whatever it was, it was wrong, and an injury to you. This I must and will atone.”

“ You will atone for all,” said Ellen in the same calm tone although her eyes were clear even to burning and the flush came and went upon her cheek. “ You will atone for all by remembering what you owe to another and by discontinuing this subject now, and coming here no more.”

“ Ellen, dear Ellen.”

“ Nay,” exclaimed the Orphan, “ such terms

as these are insult to me now. This conference must cease—our position now makes even your society an offence to another and to me.”

“That other,” cried Benfield “esteems you—I am grateful for it.”

“But I should not be so if I listened longer to you—may you both be happy. Leave me as you found me, a poor but pure-hearted girl. I forgive you all. Do not stay longer—my wish is to think well of you—nay, let go my hand Sir, do not repeat those offers, I cannot listen to them, I should be unworthy of the feeling I once bore you,” continued Ellen with a tear starting to her eye, “if I accepted what your kindness wishes to bestow. Farewell—may you be as happy as I would wish you to be—may you soon forget me—and reproach yourself as little as I will do. Nay, it must be so—you would yourself despise me if I permitted you to linger here.”

With a faint smile and the frankness of a

friend, she now held out the hand, withdrawn from a fonder pressure. The tears fell upon her cheeks uncontrolled, but there was an earnestness in her mild countenance that might not be denied. Benfield's eyes were not dry; he took her offered hand—pressed it respectfully to his lips, and they met no more,

Ellen's heart was lighter after he was gone; she was conscious of having fulfilled a duty—perhaps too the evident contrition and concern which Benfield felt was grateful to her. But this if it existed at all was but a momentary feeling. Her heart had suffered bereavement, the fairy prospects of life were withered;—she had loved so well and fondly, that now amid all the anguish its memory occasioned, Ellen could not regret her love. True her heart was tortured by such remembrance, and the joys of hope were for ever banished; yet with woman's enthusiastic fondness she would not

have exchanged for apathy, the passion which had caused her anguish.

On the following day poor Ellen returned to her labours. Her companions marked her blanched cheek and the change in her manner; but so absorbed in her own thoughts did she appear that none chose to enquire the cause of her unhappiness, or venture even to notice it. Often during the day did she turn her head aside to prevent the trickling tears falling on the work she was employed upon—all saw that she was distressed, but all saw also that hers was a sorrow that sought not sympathy.

Days glided by and Ellen's depression of spirits continued. Her companions prompt as they were to rally one another, forbore to do so in Ellen's case—for all felt for one who was the first to feel for others, and who on her own account never complained. The period of Lady Frances' marriage drew near—the day was fixed—the bridal dress was ordered.

"You will come to Belgrave Square on Thursday fortnight and assist to arrange my toilet," said the Bride elect to Ellen, when she gave the order. "You must devote that morning to me."

"Your bridal day I trust will be a happy one," said Ellen mournfully, "but perhaps it is one I shall not be permitted to see."

"Don't fear that Ellen," said her kind patroness, "I will ask Mrs. Skinner myself, she will not deny me that favor I am sure. And I must arrange after I return to town that you shall come and live with me as my Needlewoman."

Ellen blushed faintly, and a mournful smile came for a moment upon her face; but it had such a look of sorrow, that Lady Frances could not help remarking it.

"Why do you smile so sadly?" said she looking earnestly upon Ellen. "Nay, you are ill, child; your eyes are clear, and there is a

hectic flush upon your cheek. How selfish I have been not to have remarked it until now; you are ill indeed Ellen; you are unhappy too. Nay, do not conceal it, I see you are. Tell me the cause. Nay, do not turn away. Whatever it is, you need not fear to reveal it to me."

But the manifest pain which these enquiries gave made the kind hearted Lady Frances desist from urging them; and after observing to Mrs. Skinner that her young favorite appeared to be unwell, and earnestly requesting that every attention might be paid to her, Lady Frances departed.

Nearly a week elapsed ere she could again call to see her humble friend, for Lady Frances left town that evening on a visit to the mother of Sir Charles. The moment she returned she drove to Mrs. Skinner's. On enquiring for Ellen her ladyship was informed that the day following that on which she had seen her,

Ellen had become suddenly worse, and by Mrs. Skinner's directions had been conveyed to her Father's lodgings; as it being the busy season she could not spare any of her "young ladies" to attend to her. With a look of displeasure, at her instructions being so ill attended to, Lady Frances re-entered her carriage and drove to Ellen's humble abode. An elderly female admitted her, and she entered the room where the invalid was reposing.

It was a bright summer's day. The sun was shining gladly into that humble chamber; a few drooping plants, whose flowers hung withering, stood in the window, and opposite on a low temporary couch lay the fading girl. There was something of resemblance between herself and those withering plants; they were fading from being in an unnatural soil, and for want of the pure breezes and kindly dews of Heaven; she was sinking from the ungenial circumstances by which she was surrounded,

and pining for the want of some kindred heart to sustain and cherish her. Such was the simile that passed through the mind of her visitant.

Ellen slumbered. Her long eyelashes were closed; but there was beauty in the sweet expression of the sleeping features, in spite of her sunken cheek, and the hectic spot which glowed too brightly amid the wan hue of the features that surrounded it. Poor as was the couch on which the invalid rested, it had an air of neatness and comfort, and the hand that lay upon the covering, although attenuated, was beautifully formed, and delicate. The opening of the door, and Lady Frances' entrance with the woman who conducted her, awoke Ellen. Languidly opening her eyes to see who the visitor was, their look brightened for a moment, while an expression of pleasure passed over her pale features as Lady Frances, taking her hand, bent over the invalid with enquiries of kindness.

“ Poor girl ! How changed since I saw you last,” she exclaimed, gazing through tears upon Ellen’s face ; “ you must have suffered much ; oh ! why was I not apprised of this ? ”

Ellen smiled mournfully. “ What need was there,” said she, to trouble you with sorrow at such a period ; in less than a fortnight you will be a bride.”

“ But not a happy one if you are ill, Ellen.”

“ Happy ! oh yes ! with Charles—I mean Sir Charles Benfield you—you must be happy. And I am glad of it,” continued she with sudden fervour. “ Oh ! I am glad that you will be happy. You deserve to be so. Let not my poor sorrows obtrude—what joy has the world for me ? ”

“ But it would have had ! ” cried her lovely Patroness enthusiastically, “ you would have lived with me, Ellen ; I should have been so fond of you ; Charles too—but I see I must

not talk—that flush again!—you are very ill, my poor girl,” added the speaker, putting her white hand to Ellen’s now crimsoned brow.

“I shall not witness your happiness,” said the invalid, musingly; “but I rejoice at it. Oh! if you knew how I loved—you. You were so kind—so good—nobody was kind to me but you, God will bless you for it,” faltered the dying girl while the tears ran down her cheeks. “He will bless—bless you—and—”

“Do not talk so; Ellen,” said Lady Frances deeply moved; “I must hasten to send a proper medical attendant and a careful nurse; I will see you every day.”

“They are numbered,” murmured Ellen with a mournful smile.

“Do not say that! you will yet be well again, and come and live with me; but you

are exhausted, I must indeed leave you to send better assistance. Our physician shall be here within an hour. I will see him afterwards and send you what he orders. Compose yourself, dear Ellen, until he arrives; I will be with you soon again."

And the high born Beauty, bent over the poor Milliner's Apprentice, and kissed her pallid brow.

Within the hour, as Lady Frances promised, every assistance and comfort that money could procure, surrounded the sick bed of Ellen Lawrance.

* * * * *

A gay and brilliant party were assembled at the Dowager Countess of Milton's splendid mansion in Belgrave Square;—that morning her Ladyship's beautiful daughter had been led to the altar by one of the noblest commoners of England. A handsome travelling

carriage with four gallant greys stood in waiting at the door—their arching necks, and hoofs pawing impatiently, beneath the restraining rein. The newly-married pair were preparing to depart. Lady Frances was magnificently attired—and never had she looked more lovely. The white bridal veil blending well with her delicate complexion, fair brow, and deep blue eyes.

Emily Benfield with the heedless girlishness of her character was admiring Lady Frances' dress. Questions were asked by the fair bevy assembled concerning it; Lady Frances answered them with reluctance—and a look of sudden sadness came over her expressive features.

“What has brought that shade to my dear one's brow,” said Sir Charles Benfield gallantly as he conducted his lovely Bride down the noble staircase to the carriage.—A tear stood in the beautiful eyes he fondly gazed into.

"They were admiring my dress," replied Lady Frances, "and it makes me sad to look on it. You remember the fair girl whom Emily brought you to see one morning."

"I do," answered the Bridegroom, in hurried accents.

"She died last night," replied Lady Frances in a mournful voice, pressing tremulously the arm she held.

Benfield's cheek grew ashy pale, and his troubled eye saw not the bowing groups of domestics assembled in the hall through which they passed.—The next moment he was seated beside his bride—the carriage door closed—and as fast as the light-limbed steeds could gallop the newly wedded couple quitted London.

A few weeks after these events Jack Lawrence died in the Fleet Prison.

* * * * *

Years have glided on since that nuptial morn-

ing; and in the affection of an estimable husband the gentle virtues of Lady Frances have met their reward. But Sir Charles Benfield, in his walks through the streets of the Metropolis, never passes a female with a Milliner's basket, without a pang of self reproach, and a tributary sigh to the memory of Ellen Lawrence.

CHRONICLE SIXTH.

THE TWO FRIENDS.

THE TWO FRIENDS.

CHAPTER I.

“ Still panting o’er a crowd to reign,
More joy it gives to Woman’s breast,
To make ten frigid Coxcombs vain,
Than one true manly Lover blest !”

MOORE.

It is said that no Portrait painter could hit the likeness of Garrick’s varying features ; but puzzling as their trained expressions must have been, it would have been a harder task to paint the changeful face of young Caroline Merton. Her whole aspect was a riddle ; she

always pleased—often fascinated; but ever made you think, ponder, and doubt, if you had been delighted by a woman or a child. Young and beautiful she always seemed; but at one moment she looked a mere romping girl, at another a prudish but accomplished woman. To see her playing at hide and seek with a few school girls; her tossing hair, flushed cheek, and sparkling eyes, with the wild buoyancy of her *petite* figure, and the cries of joy which she uttered ever and anon, would make you smile that you had ever for a moment treated her as a woman, then again to see her pensively seated leaning her brow upon her hand, or conversing calmly with full grown men and women, her whole manner, expression of countenance, and even figure seeming to have changed to the aspect of womanhood, would make you feel that to address her in any other character would be almost insulting. And the suddenness of these

metamorphoses perplexed one the more. In a moment, without giving the least warning, her little mouth, from smiling at the light badinage addressed to her as a girl, would suddenly assume a cold and haughty expression ; her fine eyes and beautiful features look calm and staid, and what you uttered the instant before as an innocent raillery, now seemed, to your confusion, to have been an impertinence. Such a girl was Caroline Merton.

Frank Elton was nine and twenty, the heir to a good fortune, and endowed with most of those qualities of mind and body which serve to make a man shine in the world. He was accomplished, talented, and high spirited ; had travelled, seen what is called " life," and indeed, on one or two occasions, almost " death" as well ; for in his early manhood his temper, naturally warm and petulant, had led him into quarrels both at home and abroad. His

knowledge of the world amended this, but his natural character united to great refinement of thought changed his temper from petulance to fastidiousness—yet not to any offensive degree. It was, indeed, a disposition of feeling, rather than of character, for his good sense and generous sentiments alike prevented anything approaching to moroseness, peevishness, or any act whether of impatience or deliberation which selfishness could call her own.

Yet this feeling tempered his reflexions more perhaps than he was aware of, and in no instance more so than in his ideas of the gentler sex. Like most young men he had his own peculiar thoughts regarding them, for this is a subject upon which, like religion, it is difficult to find two reflecting men who think alike. Frank had many serious cogitations on this subject;—the former one we mean—many doubts and difficulties as to the matrimonial venture, the greatest era of life. Being rich

he had no desire to marry wealth, being handsome, he wished for beauty, and being intelligent, he had a horror of uniting himself "for the term of his natural life" to a fool.

Now it seemed easy for such a man as he to find a "conjugal dove," who was tolerably "beautiful and wise," but Frank wished for something more than that. His opinion of the sex was, perhaps, as little flattering to his own discernment as it was to them, but such as it was it made him jealous of their influence. His experience of the world made him regard them as light headed and light hearted, prone to love, and prone to forget. Frank Elton required perfect devotion of heart—the kind of love we read of in romances;—he scorned a place in a heart that had ever harboured another guest; he wished for a first affection—like Adam to have a mate created for himself. He could not understand the give and take principle of flirtation; the eyes that had ever

smiled kindly upon another, might just as well attempt to fascinate the Duke of York on the top of his monument, as to bring Frank Elton to their owner's feet.

He had a friend of exactly the same way of thinking. Both gentlemen had an excellent opinion of themselves and of each other, and matrimony by both was regarded in the light, rather of a surrender, than an acquisition. Harry Melford (such was the name of Frank's friend) was also blessed with many advantages of nature and fortune. They had both a desire to marry, but in the meantime they did nothing but deliberate.

"Well now, Harry," said Elton one gay evening, as they stood together commenting on the beauties that flitted past them in the brilliant saloon of the exclusive Lady N——. "I declare that Caroline Merton improves every time, I see her. What eyes! what a lovely head, and what a figure the fairy has.

Don't you notice her Hal?" continued he keeping his eye glass fixed upon Caroline.

"Pshaw! a child, a bread-and-butter darling—a mere nursery beauty."

"Nay, by my faith, but look at her! Heavens she is an angel."

"Why, Frank, you are mad; the girl is a child."

"Only look at her."

"Well—I had no idea she had grown a girl like that. Why yes, she is beautiful. But then she must be very young."

"I wish to heaven," resumed Elton, "I knew her age. Let me see. I was a boy in the nursery when Colonel Merton married Lady Mary Singleton.—I can remember it, Hal;—Now how old would that make her?"

"My dear fellow, what a foolish question. How can I possibly tell her age from that? But I dare say," continued Melford with a

suppressed yawn, "if you are very anxious to know the young lady's age, she will tell it you herself."

"And I will ask it," said Elton resolutely. "I was once a favorite with little Cary, and now that she has become a woman perhaps I may be a favorite still. Harry," continued he looking gravely towards his friend, "I think I shall marry that girl."

"You are mad, Frank, essentially mad. Marry a girl hardly emancipated from the nursery?"

"Nay, she is a woman—and the loveliest too in the room."

"Well, Frank if *you* think so, why—"

"Nay, but you must be blind not to admit it."

"Ah well, marry then, by all means, marry; Buy a new edition of 'Little Red Riding Hood,' for your bride to study; open an account with a confectioner, and advertise

for a music-master. But you're off. And as I live," continued Melford, looking after his friend, "he is at Caroline's side, and I declare she welcomes him with a smile, blushes too,—now they are walking together. Humph!," continued the soliloquist walking slowly away, "I wonder if there's madness in Frank's family?"

A brief hour had passed and Caroline Merton still hung on the arm of the fascinated Elton. He seemed anxious at every pause to ask her something, but as often found it impossible to pronounce the words. At length, almost trembling, he said with husky abruptness:—"Miss Merton, how old are you?"

Caroline neither frowned, pouted, nor appeared surprised, but looking calmly up to his face, answered—"Sixteen, and some few months."

“Caroline,” said Elton fervently, “I love you.”

The young lady blushed crimson at the words; the next moment looked as if she would give a laugh and rush from his side; but no, the little round arm still linked in his own—she hung her head, and had there been no one by, Caroline Merton would have wept.

It matters not to tell what, or how, she answered. On the following day Caroline looked sad; but her eyes brightened when she saw a handsome cab drive up to her father’s door. Then she blushed, and then again looked paler than before. These visits continued for a few months, and ended in Caroline Merton leaving London as Frank Elton’s bride.

CHAPTER II.

It was a fair May morning, a few years after his marriage, and Elton sat lolling in his easy chair in the breakfast parlour of his handsome mansion in G * * * Square, looking listlessly over the columns of a newspaper, while his lady who had not yet finished the morning repast sat at the table glancing sometimes at

her husband, but more frequently at her own white and jewelled hands.

"Where do you go to-day my dear?" enquired Frank Elton allowing the paper to drop upon his knee.

"I accompany Lady Protégé to Squelini's morning concert at two."

"Humph. And after that?"

"I *think* I shall drive down to the Countess of Somerton's Fête Champêtre."

"And so end the day?"

"No, I cannot possibly stay long, as I must return to dress for the Opera, for I promised faithfully to meet Lucy Lennox there; and after the Opera we *may* look in at Mrs. Howard's rout."

"Morning concert, fête, opera, and rout, all in one day—upon my word my dear, you are running a race of gaiety against time."

"Why Frank, you know I married at six-

teen—I am yet hardly twenty, and if I do not enjoy some little recreation now—pray when am I?”

“Some *little* recreation?”

“I declare Frank you are grown so morose, there is no living with you.”

“I should think not my dear, for you seldom do. But really, Caroline, I wish to heaven you would not run so much about.”

“My most sage Mentor, would you have one at my age coop herself up like a dowager of seventy?”

“Your age, humph!”

“And you know I never knew what gaiety, as you call it, was, until I was married.”

“Exactly, my love. It is all quite *true*—but exceedingly disagreeable to me, nevertheless—I have no domestic comfort, none in the world,” continued the disappointed husband.

Caroline’s hand stopped in the act of lifting

her coffee cup to her lips, and placing it again on the table, she burst into a fit of laughter. "Domestic comfort!" continued she still laughing. "Domestic comfort."

"Yes," repeated Elton, "domestic comfort, madam. But I have no doubt the words have a strange sound to you. There is no husband in England would more gladly renounce all society than I; clubs, meetings, race-course, I would give up all, could I but find that calm—'

"Nay, nay, nay, dear Frank, do not become sententious. I am sure you cannot say that I give you much trouble. There is Mrs. Colonel Lenox, now, who is always teasing that unfortunate husband of hers even before strangers, with, 'Where were you last night, my dear?' 'Where did you dine yesterday?' 'When shall you return this evening?' There is Lady Stuart who gambles deeply, Mrs. Forrester, who would

lavish the wealth of Cræsus in dress and jewels—my old friend Ellen Hamilton, who makes her husband mortgage his estate once a year to pay debts that *I* should be ashamed of—Lady Mary—”

“Ay, ay, Caroline, but what consolation is all this to me? Am I better for Colonel Lenox, being bored, and Tom Hamilton ruined? Seriously, Caroline, when you see that I go so little out, you really ought to—”

“But Frank, you know you are many years my senior, and you cannot expect that at my age I should shut myself up from *all* amusement.”

“Humph!” Because *you* are a foolish girl, I am to be considered old before I am thirty-three. Well, well, my love, go on your own way, I hope my sorrows may be sanctified, that’s all.”

Rap, rap, rap—rap, rap, rap!

“Who the deuce is this now? it is too early

for *your* friends," continued Frank going to the window. "Ah! it's Harry Melford."

"By the bye, I hear he is on the eve of marriage with Clara Morley" said Caroline rising. But good bye, now Frank. I *may* dine at home to-day—but—but—you need'nt wait for me. So saying the beautiful but thoughtless wife glided away, humming an Opera air.

"Ah, Frank, my dear fellow, how are you?" cried Melford, entering the room, holding out both hands, and shaking those of his friend heartily. How are you? But why should I ask that," continued he as they seated themselves, "with such a wife as you have, you *must* be happy. You are a lucky dog, Frank."

"*Very*," rejoined the other drily.

"Young, beautiful, and accomplished—a *first* love too. Egad now, Frank, I consider you to be the most fortunate man in England.

Mr. Frank Elton threw himself back in his chair and looked at the ceiling.

"I presume," continued Melford, "you have heard that I too am about to become a Benedict. Deaths and marriages are public news, eh?"

"I have just this moment heard it."

"And the lady?"

"Oh, the lady, yes, I heard that too, but I have forgot it—I have no curiosity in these matters now, Hal."

"I dare say not. Envy no man, covet no man's possessions, happy in your own; but the lady's name is Clara Morley—you knew her once I think."

"Ah, yes—yes, I think I remember the name."

"You must remember the lady too, for we both used to dance and flirt with her some years ago. No first love, I fear, mine Frank,—but then few can hope to be so fortunate as yourself."

"It is a modest wish," rejoined Frank thoughtfully.

"You remember you used to say that a woman's heart was worthless unless it gave you its first *love*."

"If I said so, it was a grievous error, and 'grievously has Cæsar answered it.'"

"How, how Frank, what do you mean?"

"That you lose nothing by losing your bride's first love."

"Ay, Frank, but Clara has flirted with half the town."

"So much the better—had she flirted with half the country too."

"By Heaven, you surprise me, Frank. But I don't quite see your meaning."

"It is this, Harry. All women flirt at some period of their lives, and if they have not done so before marriage, take my word for it they will after. It is a disease like the small pox, mildest when taken young—and not so apt to leave marks either. Thank your stars

Hal that your bride's flirting fit will be over ; she has learned enough of the worthlessness of conquest and the caprice of men's hearts to appreciate your affection—I—I am now convinced," added poor Elton, "there is no woman makes such a good wife as an old flirt."

"Old. Ay there's another thing. Clara is rather *passée*—she's now six or seven and twenty—but then such eyes !"

"Oh, never mind her eyes. Six or seven and twenty ! Harry give me your hand—you will be a happy man. I wish you joy sincerely—most sincerely."

"But Frank."

"Nay never mind, I'll tell you all about it. But I see your cab is at the door. Just wait till I draw on my boots, we'll take a drive together—and then come back here and have a tête-tête dinner."

"A tête-à-tête dinner ! Mrs. Elton, is not she—"

"She's gone to the dev— that is I mean, I don't know where she is gone ;—but," continued Frank drily, "but she told me—'not to wait.'"

A

WIND-UP CHAPTER.

A WIND-UP CHAPTER.

" So ends this strange eventful history."

SHAKSPEARE.

" **LIFE**" is a word, which in the sense assumed in the title of this work, embraces almost all the popular topics of the economy of society, and the intercourse of the world. On these many have written, and some have written well. Yet as the great features of human passions, and the more striking incidents of human life, have not been so wholly portrayed

by the loftier names in imaginative literature, as to leave *no* gleanings even for such writers as the present,—so on the other hand those who have considered these subjects in what has been termed a “philosophical light,” have not so wholly exhausted it as to leave no room for the more humble utterance of a woman’s thoughts. Nay, it may even be affirmed, that not unfrequently the treatment which many of those subjects have received at the hands of these wise men, has been somewhat similar to “breaking a butterfly upon a wheel;” and that often while anatomizing its downy wings, the angry breath of their own controversies, has wafted their subtle subject away. Certain it is that many of those maxims into which like an elixir the more corporeal part of their systems have been reduced, if not “flat and stale,” are for the most part exceedingly “unprofitable.”

“I’ll rant as well as you,” says Hamlet

and so say we. And wherefore not? Surely a philosophy of axioms—a philosophy of observation, and that observation too, directed to society is not beyond a woman's province? Nay, perhaps it comes even more within her sphere. To man, the harmony of society is something—to woman, it is everything. Her power, her dignity, all her virtues are social; in her proper sphere she is omnipotent, but isolated she is helpless. She cannot clothe herself with the gloomy mantle of a Cato-like grandeur, nor perhaps is she envious of it. She lives for others—her dearest joy is homage—but it is the homage of love. Under a thousand different names that is the master passion of her nature, from infancy when her little heart throbs at a parent's caress, until old age, when a grandam she returns it again. Society is her book, and she reads it with a keener eye than man, watches its influences more nar-

rowly because, in sooth, she is more affected by them.

Let us then close our task by venturing some brief reflexions on a few of the popular topics of "Life."

The Aristocracy of Riches, strange as it may appear, is the only true one. The refinement of that condition has seldom survived a few years of real poverty, a generation—never. The sons and daughters of the "Poor gentleman," who have been born in poverty, and reared in indigence, exhibit no exalted tastes to show the order from which they are sprung, and the Count who cleans his own boots soon finds it for his own ease to accommodate himself to habits which quickly rub away the halo of a name.

No!—rank, like wisdom, is worthless in a garret. *La philosophie triomphe aisément des maux passés et des maux à venir ; mais les*

maux présens triomphent d'elle. The Sage's calm brow contracts into fretful wrinkles, the decayed Aristocrat begs of his friend,—the haughty step becomes a shuffle, and the proud countenance abject.

What is aristocracy? not as an institution or an "order," but as it manifests itself in the individual? Look at it, examine it well, strip it of its *advantages*, and see how many of its *attributes* will remain!

In a quiet little street at no great distance from one of the parks there live two men whom Birth and Fortune have severally favored, and Fate has made next-door neighbours, as if to illustrate the efficacy of their various gifts. The one is an Artist, the grandson of a French Marquis; the other is a retired Grocer, whose family can trace its pedigree no further back than himself. The Artist shuffles along the street with his portfolio under his arm, his long untended hair falling over his bent

shoulders, his dress threadbare, his boots broken, and his linen shewing no signs of a careful huswife's attention. The policeman looks on him with a smile, the hurrying postman jostles him aside, and the butcher's boy does not turn out of his way. His looks are abject—the expression of the poor man's countenance is grovelling—for the descendant of *princez chevaliers* has more than once asked a shilling of the passing stranger to buy him bread.

Now turn we to the Grocer. He is a man somewhat past the meridian of life; but his cheeks are healthy and his eye is clear. He walks firm and erect—unconsciously purses out his lips at times, wears a clear white neckcloth, and carries a gold-headed cane. Is there a crowd in the street? he pauses on the pavement and demands the cause of it from the first person who approaches. He is answered respectfully even if it is a coxcomb who replies. He passes on.

Does he enter a shop? even though a stranger he is first attended to. There is a self-possession in his air, created by the consciousness of his ample means, and the habitude of receiving the homage which wealth never fails to command; this, without any assumptive effort on his own part, gives a real dignity to his bearing, which of itself commands respect.

True, his education has been limited, and his ideas are not enlarged. But these do not exert a prominent influence over the ordinary intercourse of life. There is at least no meanness in his character; his prejudices are the wholesome prejudices of a man rich, and old enough, to be obstinate with a grace. He is a fine old fellow the retired Grocer, and would be voted "a lord," by any innkeeper on the Rhine.

Aristocracy of nature consists indeed in higher qualities than a good dress and composure of carriage. But let it be referred to refinement of taste;—alas! stern poverty will en-

gender *habits* which destroy it. Let it consist in generosity of thought and urbanity of manner; a life of indigence will soon change their nature too, for indigence is not a *solitary* suffering, its own peculiar privations are easily borne, it is the effect of these upon others, and thence upon ourselves, which gradually undermines the dignity of our character, and secretly steals away our self-respect.

Wealth, despised as it is affected to be by all, is the proper parent of every refinement. Rank, education, and enlarged ideas follow unseen and silently in its train; while Poverty drags after it, the dim spectres of abasement and contempt. "*Fuimus*" is a good motto in heraldry, but a foolish one in the world.

Beauty is the power of woman, as Knowledge is the power of man. But the word must be taken in an equally extended sense. Beauty is no more to be confined to harmony of form, than

knowledge is to an acquaintance with mathematics, but to those qualities of person, feeling and character which are best expressed by the epithet "endearing."

Hence the common and true remark that woman's strength lies in her weakness; and hence the cause why her power of pleasing is seldom in the ratio of her approaches to perfection. The glory of the starry Heavens has magnificence which we admire, but the beauty of the moonlight scene has a softness which we love.

"We do not always love those whom we admire, but we always love those who admire us." There is a haughty carriage in some beautiful women which betrays a passion for dominion, and an ascerbity of manner in others who lack beauty, which shews that they not only do not expect homage but also that they despise it. It is from these two classes that the order of old maids is chiefly peopled.

A French Poet has remarked of the female sex, that—

“ Peut etre si'l etoit. plus parfait
Il sera moins aimable.”

And this is true. Burke amid the nonsense which he has written on this subject has observed, that “ an appearance of delicacy, and even of *fragility* is almost essential to beauty.” The orator did not quite carry this characteristic to mental fragility, but he might have done so. The one sex is more gratified by sustaining the relying weakness of the other, than by gazing with rapt eyes on the most brilliant charms with which a daughter of Eve was ever arrayed. The latter may command the admiration of the many, but the former will obtain the affection of one. The one is a picture for the eyes—the other is an image for the heart. It is not likely, if Cato were alive, that there is a single woman in England who would

fall in love with him. In France, he would be black-balled at once—he would not know Italy now, nor would Italy care for knowing him. No! there may be an un-human character of Virtue as well as an un-human character of Vice, but both are monstrous, and monsters are not usually objects of love. Ladies in former days did not fall in love with giants, nor knights with giantesses, on the contrary they were disgusted at them, and female accomplishments, in the present day, when they become gigantic, have generally the same effect.

How many a bright, and brilliant girl, has been lost to herself and to the world, from simply being ignorant, that *dependance* is the sweetest element in the beauty of woman.

“Few men,” says the philosopher, “know how to grow old”—and he might have added, that small as their number is, it is even greater than that of the other sex. To grow old is indeed the most trying calamity of female

existence. Age is the hydra which haunts her through life; even in Youth it stands like a fearful phantom before her, beckoning her to advance. It is never absent from her mind; she either congratulates herself upon the distance she is yet from it, or busies herself with repairing its ravages. The more sensitive feeling which exists between the sexes on this particular, is strikingly illustrated by the fact, that a man sometimes wishes to appear older than he really is, but a woman,—*never*.

Beauty is dearer to woman than life. As “cowards die many times, but the valiant only taste of death once;” so decay with woman is a continual death.

The mere lack or want of beauty is by no means such a grievous matter as it is often represented to be. The power of pleasing does not depend so much upon harmony of features, as upon other causes which are almost universally overlooked. Beauty consists in

grace and expression, and a certain mystic connection with some mental quality which these seem to indicate. Sweetness, love, passion, nobility of character, or some other feeling, is secretly connected with every beautiful face. So perfectly so, that beauty indeed is but a mirroring, real or imagined, of some mental charm, which the features are supposed to be moulded from, and to obey. Now, all the influence of such feelings may be obtained without the aid of beauty; but never without the aid of youth! In vain does woman substitute accomplishments which would have enhanced the charms of her younger days, for those charms themselves—if her wit and talents raise for a while a bright throne for her to occupy, it will vanish on the approach of youthful beauty, as the imperial Catharine's palace of ice, sank without a ruin, before a noon-day sun.

No! the dream must pass away, when we

find it is but a dream. There is more philosophy in the application of Æsop's fable of the fox and the grapes than in a whole treatise upon the "worthlessness and instability of human things." It may be a malicious pleasure to know that those who are enjoying the advantages we sigh at parting with, are not in most cases a whit *happier* for possessing them ; but the fact is true, and the satisfaction it affords can injure no one. It is high time that at such a period, a woman should become a philosopher. It was not until Reynard was convinced that the grapes were wholly beyond his power, that he found leisure to consider whether they might be sour or not. And how often has Youth plucked the sunny fruit from every branch of Pleasure's tree, only to find that all was bitterness ? Yes, few, few women indeed, know how to become old. Happiness consists less in the possession of the things we covet, than in the absence of any inordinate desire for

them ; and this is all the happiness which we can hope for, when once we enter the shady valley of the journey of life.

“ When Youth’s wild hour has passed away
With all its fevering hopes and fears ;
May calm contentment shed its ray,
To light us through the vale of years.”

The difference between the means of happiness in Youth and Age is this ;—Youth may find partial happiness in other ways than in its legitimate abode, but Age *must* seek it there alone, or be miserable. It seems as if Nature, attentive to the necessities of mankind, spreads pleasure on every hand to heedless youth, but when mature years, the season of experience, arrives, these smiling phantoms disappear, and REASON, VIRTUE, and RELIGION, point with unerring finger to that serene temple, hidden and unheeded indeed, amid the bustle of the world, where the treasure lies which all are contending for, and the mild beams of happiness for ever shine.

END.

T. C. Newby, Printer, Angel Hill, Bury.

